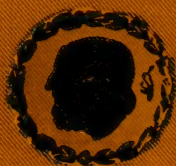




STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY

BY A. J. CHURCH, M. A.





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A NORMAN SHIP

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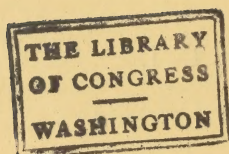
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PART I.
UNDER THE ROMANS.



CHAPTER I.

CAIUS VALERIUS AND HIS GRANDFATHER.

(*Time*, A.D. 85.)

CAIUS. It has been a great day at the school, grandfather. The Governor himself came in to see the classes. He heard us recite. Only think! I was chosen to do it in my class, though there are at least six of the boys who are older than I.

GRANDFATHER. What was the book, and what was the piece? But very likely I have never heard it.

C. Oh yes! you know it. You have heard me say it again and again. I don't think that there is any piece that I like quite so well. It was the "Shield of Aeneas," out of Virgil.

G. Well, and how did you get on?

C. Fairly well, I hope; at least the Governor praised me. He said something kind about my manner, and told me that I had caught the true Roman accent.

And when he had gone through all the classes, and we were assembled in the hall, he made a little speech to the teachers and us. He thanked the teachers for their diligence. "You have done all," he



THE ROMAN GOVERNOR.

said, "that I expected, and more ; though," he went on, turning to us, and smiling, "you have had excellent material to work upon." We clapped our hands vigorously at that, as you may suppose. Then came our turn. "I am glad to see so many of you here," he said. "The first year, and, I think, the second, after this school was opened, I could hardly have found a corporal's guard, and now you would more than make a company. I don't want you to cease to be Britons, but I want to make you Romans. As Romans, you have the

whole world before you."

G. Very fine ! but for my part, if they would have kept their whole world, and left us our little island, I should have been well content.

C. But, grandfather, don't you like the Romans, then? I am sure they have done a great deal for us. The school, for instance. Why, they say that there isn't so fine a school in all Gaul. And the Governor—what a fine fellow he is! There is nobody like him.

G. True, my boy, true. Agricola, as they call him, is a fine fellow. He is the very best Roman I ever saw. And his people have done a great deal for us. Baths, theatres, temples, fine houses, fine clothes, and I don't know what else. What a change from things as they were! Baths indeed! The rivers and lakes were good enough for us; as for theatres, we were quite content with the old man who sat in the chimney corner, and sang to his harp; an oak tree served well enough for a temple; there wasn't a stone house in the whole island, a chief lived under timber, and mud served a common man's turn; while for clothes, skins kept us warm, with a shirt of wool in winter. As for the schools, they are, I confess, the best thing they have brought us yet. In old time only the priests knew anything; now the gate is open. Still, I wish that we in Britain had never seen these strangers from the South.

C. But, grandfather, this is all very strange. You never talked to me in this way before.

G. No, my boy, and never shall again. But you

are growing up. You are just about to put on the man's gown, are you not ?

C. Yes, three days hence.

G. Then it is about time that you should hear the story of your country. When you were a child, it was of no use to trouble you ; in a few days you will be a man, and ought to have a man's thoughts. Now listen.

First I must tell you something about your family. Up to this time I have purposely kept you in ignorance. Well, you and I are all that are left of it, and I, you must understand, am not your grandfather, as you have been used to call me, but your great-grandfather. Your mother died when you were born, just sixteen years ago ; how her father died you will hear in the course of my story. He, you must know, was my eldest son. Well, I was a man of nine lustres,¹ as the Romans put it—and it is, I must own, a convenient way of reckoning—when the Romans first came to our island.

C. Oh, grandfather, I have always thought that it was many more years than that, far more indeed than the very oldest man in Britain can possibly remember.

G. True, my boy, you are right in a way ; what I meant was, *the first time they came to stay*. Of course

¹ A "lustre" was a period of five years.

the other was long before my time, or any one else's that is now alive.

C. Yes, it was in Julius Caesar's time, the very first of the Roman emperors, and there have been eleven since him, counting the one who is reigning now. Julius—the "Divine Julius" our teacher calls him—wrote about it. We often have a dictation from his book.

G. Well, I have often heard the whole story from some one who had to do with it, and that was my grandfather.

C. And can you remember what he told you?

G. Perfectly; I was about ten years old when he died. He was a very old man, as you may suppose, but quite clear in his mind, and remembering everything that had happened in his youth, though he had no memory for things of yesterday. He could not remember, for instance, the name of the slave who waited on him, nor my name. He would tell the same story over and over again, forgetting that he had told it perhaps an hour before. I heard what I am going to tell you I don't know how many times, and as I have got something of the same kind of memory as he had, now that I am old—not so old as he was, though, by ten years at the least—I can almost remember his very words.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST COMING OF JULIUS CAESAR.

“ I WAS just thirty years old,” my grandfather said, “ and had been made a captain in the King’s body-guard, when we heard that a great number of ships were being collected on the opposite coast. Our people, you know, had come from there not many years before, and there were always a number of people going backwards and forwards between the two countries. The man who brought the news was a trader who used to carry tin from here, and bring back wine and other things that are better in Gaul than they are here. He told us that it was the Roman general who was gathering the ships, that he meant to bring over an army in them, and to conquer the island. We had heard of these Romans for some few years past ; that they had been fighting in Gaul, and had conquered a great part of the country. Some of our young men had gone over and fought on the side of the Gauls. They said that these Romans came from a country that was a long way to the south, that

they were not very strong or big, much shorter in fact than the Britons or Gauls, but wonderfully good fighters, with excellent armour and weapons, and very skilful in using them. The King, when he heard this, held a council, and it was decided that envoys should be sent to the Roman general—Caesar was his name—to ask him what he wanted. They were not only to bring back his answer, but were to find out for themselves a number of things that it was well for us to know, as, for instance, how many soldiers Caesar had with him, and when he was likely to come. The envoys returned in a few days' time. Caesar had told them that the Britons had injured him by helping his enemies in Gaul. This they must not do any more, and, as a pledge that they would not, they must give him hostages and pay tribute. Besides this, they found out for themselves that the Romans expected to find great riches in the island, especially pearls, of which they think very much. Caesar had, they thought, about eight or nine thousand men with him. Other kings in the island had sent envoys who had promised to give what Caesar asked, but our men did not believe that they really intended to do so. A day or two after they came back, we saw a Roman ship sailing along about a mile from the coast. We heard afterwards that one of the Gauls who favoured Caesar was in it, and

that he had come to find out what he could about us. That, of course, could not have been very much, as he never dared leave his ship.

“Our King never thought of giving hostages, or paying tribute, so he sent at once to his chiefs, and to the other kings within reach, telling them what he had heard and found out, and asking them for help. Before long, there were many thousands of men—at least three times as many as Caesar had—collected together. Meanwhile, there were men watching along the coast for the first sight of the enemy’s ships. It was towards the end of summer when we heard of their coming. Our men were all within easy reach, and before the Romans were within a mile of the shore, all the cliffs were lined with foot-soldiers and horse-soldiers and chariots. Of course they saw that it was of no use trying to land where the cliffs were. They would have been soon destroyed by our darts and stones. So they rowed along looking for a convenient place, and we followed along the shore. It was not difficult, even for the men on foot, to keep up with them, for the ships were mostly heavy, and the rowers could move them but very slowly. In about an hour and a half’s time—it was then nearly noon—they found what they wanted, a place where the shore was low, and there was deep water almost up to the edge. Even then, they found it no easy matter to

get to land. We could see them standing on the sides of their ships, while their officers seemed to be urging them to jump in. But they did not know how deep the water was, for it was thick with sand, and then they had their heavy armour on, and they did not like to make the trial, all the less because we were standing ready for them, some on the shore, and others knee-deep in the water. We began to think that there was not much to be afraid of, when, all of a sudden, we found ourselves pelted with such a shower of darts and stones that there was no standing against it. The darts came with a force that no one could possibly put into his throw, and the stones were of such a size—as big as a man's head some of them—that I could not have thrown them twice the length of a spear, and I was able to throw as far as most men in those days. I was knocked over myself, and should have been drowned, being in the water at the time, had not my brother carried me ashore."

C. Where did the stones come from?

G. From the machines, catapults they call them. You must have seen them. The old man did not know anything about them, when he told the story, nor did any one else in Britain till the Romans came again. But to go on with his story.

"I came to myself very soon, and then I saw that

we had all been obliged to get out of reach of the darts and stones. Very soon afterwards, I saw a man with something shining in his hand jump from one of the ships into the water."

C. Ah! that must have been the Eagle.¹ The



ROMAN SOLDIERS WITH THE EAGLE.

extract that was read by the master the other day was about it. "The officer who carried the eagle of the

¹ Every Roman legion had an eagle. It was a likeness of the bird, with its wings stretched out for flight, and holding a thunderbolt in its claws. It was commonly made of silver, but sometimes of gold, and was mounted on the top of a long pole.

Tenth Legion"—this is what it was—"prayed to the gods that what he was going to do might turn out well for the legion, and said, '*Comrades, jump down, except you want to let the enemy have the eagle; I at least will do my duty to my country and my general.*' This he shouted at the top of his voice, and at the same time jumped down into the sea and began to carry the eagle in the direction of the enemy."

G. Caesar wrote that, did he? So my grandfather was not mistaken. But to go on.

"A number of men from all the ships followed him. Even then we made a good fight of it. They were better armed, but then they didn't know the ground as we did. However, whenever they were hard pushed, boats full of their own people came to help them, and at last they made their way to the shore, driving us before them. We could not stand against their arms. Their heavy iron swords broke ours into pieces, while ours could hardly make any impression upon their armour. We thought it a lucky thing that they had no horsemen to pursue us with.

"The next day the King held a council. We were all greatly discouraged. It seemed no use to fight with these strangers. If they could land in spite of us, when the advantage was so much on our side, what was the good of trying to meet them on equal

terms? So we sent envoys to the general, saying that we would do what he wanted, that is, make our submission to him and give hostages. He gave us ten days to fetch the hostages.

“ But before the time was out the Romans got into great trouble. On the fourth day after their coming there was a very high tide, which always comes on the day after the full moon, and a strong wind blowing on to the shore with it. They did not seem to know anything about high tides. The ships had not been drawn up on the shore out of the reach of the sea, and those that were at anchor had their cables so short that they were sunk. Some of our chiefs, who were in their camp, waiting for the hostages, when they saw what had happened, made the best of their way to the King. ‘ We have these people in a trap,’ they said. ‘ Their ships are so damaged that they will not be able to get away. They have no provisions to speak of. And, besides, there are not nearly so many as we thought. Let us starve them out. If we do, we shall not be troubled with the Romans coming over here again.’ The King thought that this was excellent advice ; only if we were to do the thing properly, we must keep our plans secret. So the people were told to go in and out of the camp as usual, with various things to sell to the soldiers. But an ambush was laid in the woods, and when one of

the legions came out of the camp next day, and began to help themselves to the corn in the fields, as their way was, we attacked them without any notice. We knew exactly where they would be, for they had reaped all the wheat except one corner at the further end. It was all the better for us, because it had woods round it except on one side.

“At first we had the better of them, for they had piled their arms in a heap, that they might have their hands free for cutting the wheat, and some of them had taken off all their armour except their helmets. We killed a good many of them before they could get hold of their swords and spears. And when they did get hold of them they were all in confusion, and this made us more than a match for them, in spite of their iron arms and armour. But before we had done anything like all we wanted, we saw another body of them coming out of their camp, all ready for fighting. Their chief general was leading them himself. One of my comrades knew him at once, for he had been in the camp, and had seen him also two or three times on the other side of the sea. He wasn't very tall or strong to look at, but I could see that he had a face like a hawk, for at one time I was not more than a hundred paces off. All our people who had been across the sea said that he was a wonderful man to plan and scheme. No one ever found him off his

guard. You see that even then he had suspected something, and had this new army ready to help his men. If he had not done this, I reckon that not many of the others would have got back to the camp. As it was, there was very little more fighting that day. They were glad to leave off without losing any more men, and we were not strong enough to attack them when they were prepared to fight.

“For some days after it rained so hard that it was not possible to do anything. Still we weren’t idle. We sent messengers to all the kings and chiefs within reach, begging them to come to our help with all the men that they could bring. ‘The enemy,’ we told them, ‘are not nearly as strong as we thought’—that we knew from their camp being so small. ‘Now is the time to get rid of them for good and all. Most of their ships are broken to pieces, and they will not be able to get away, if they are beaten. We shall kill every one of them, and it will be a long time before their countrymen trouble us again.’

“Some of the chiefs would not help, but most of those that were at all within reach either came themselves or sent their sons or brothers with bands of men. Day after day they came flocking into our camp, till we had about three times as many men as they had. Even then some of us were against fighting. I was one of them. I thought it better to wait

and starve them out. You see they hadn't a great store of food with them, and they could not get more without running some risk. If we kept on the watch while they were foraging for provisions we must find them, sooner or later, off their guard. However, we were overruled, and the party that was for fighting had their way. It was just what the Romans wanted. The first fine day they came out of their camp, and drew up their men in order of battle. We attacked them, and what I had expected happened. We could not stand against them in an open fight. That day it was all the worse, because most of our side had never seen Romans before, and lost all heart when they found what they were like. They had been loud in boasting of what they would do, but they broke and fled almost as soon as they came to close quarters. In that battle we lost more men than on all the days before put together. This time the Romans had some horsemen, which they had never had before. There were not many of them, but they cut down numbers of our men in the pursuit.

"After this every one agreed that it would be better to make peace; so we sent envoys to the Roman camp. Caesar was fairly gracious to them. The only difference he made in his terms was that the number of hostages must be doubled.

"The next morning we had a great surprise—the

Romans were gone ! They had mended their ships all unknown to us, and now they embarked during the night. We knew nothing about it, for the fires were left burning in their camp. Besides, we were too busy attending to the wounded and burying the dead to heed what they were doing. Not long after we heard that they had got across the sea without losing any of their ships. More's the pity, I thought to myself, for I felt sure they would come again."

CHAPTER III.

THE SECOND COMING OF JULIUS CAESAR.

C. IT looks, grandfather, as if Caesar was afraid, his going off so quietly.

G. Well, my boy, it seems to me that he was afraid in one way, and was not afraid in another. He found out that he had not brought enough men, and that he had come too late, for it was close upon the stormiest time of the year. And then he knew what our people ought to have done, and what he should have done, if he had been in their place. No

doubt he was glad enough to get safe back across the sea ; I take it there was more danger in that than in anything else. And that he was really afraid I don't believe, for, you see, he came again. But to go on with my grandfather's story.

"There was great rejoicing and not a little boasting when we found the camp empty. 'They have had enough of it,' some of us said, 'we shall not see anything more of them.' That I never believed ; their general, I was quite sure, was not a man to draw back from anything that he had set his hand to. And so it turned out.

"We were not left long in doubt about what he was going to do. Before the winter was over we heard from our friends on the other side of the sea that all the ships in the country were being brought together to the harbours on the opposite coast, and that a number of new ones were being built. Later on we were told that the soldiers were being brought up to the coast, and that there would be more than three times as many as had come the year before. All this looked very serious, and as if the Romans really meant to conquer the island this time. There was some talk among us of all the kings in the country joining their forces together ; but it came to nothing, at least then. All that was done was to gather as big an army as we could find, and to

watch the coast. Some time after midsummer—the days, I remember, were beginning to get a little shorter—the fleet came in sight, at much about the same place where it had been first seen the year before. But they seemed, somehow, to be coming the other way. They had been carried too far, I suppose, by the tide, and were now coming back. As soon as we caught sight of the first ships, we made haste to get down to the beach where they had landed the year before. But when we saw what a multitude of vessels there was—there must have been nearly ten times as many as had come the last time—our men got fairly frightened. In spite of all that some of the chiefs could do to keep them at their post, they left the shore. In the end, the Romans landed without any one trying to hinder them. Afterwards we found that many of the ships we saw had no soldiers on board, but belonged to merchants. They had come with the army to buy and sell—buy any plunder that the soldiers might get, and sell them wine and other things. However, I doubt whether if we had tried to stop them from landing we should have done any good.

“They did not give us any rest. The very day of their landing, their general, without even waiting to pitch his camp, as we had expected that he would do, marched up the country after us. We tried to stop

him at a difficult place, where he had to cross a river and then make his way up a steep hill ; but it was of no use. We could not stand against him, and had to fall back upon a strong fort that had been built about twelve miles from the sea. It was now early in the morning, for the Romans must have started very soon after midnight. The camp was a very strong place, and could not be taken, we thought, in a whole moon, except by starving the garrison out. Well, it was, as I said, early in the morning when the Romans came up, and they had taken the place before noon. The soldiers covered themselves with their shields while they filled up the ditch first, and then made a mound against the wall. And all the time they did this there was no getting at them, they stood so close together and so firm. I don't suppose that we wounded more than two or three. After a while we gave up trying ; in fact we left the place to be taken.

“That night we held a council. Some were for giving in to the Romans without any more delay. ‘We can’t make any head against them,’ they said, and it really seemed as if they were right. But most of us were for holding out, but how this was to be done we could not think. At last I took courage to say what I knew a great many besides myself were thinking. ‘If we are to save Britain from being con-

quered,' I said, 'we must unite, we must have one general.' For a time there was silence. At last some one cried out, 'And who is this one general to be?' 'Who can doubt?' I said; 'it must be King



ROMAN SOLDIERS ATTACKING A FORT.

Caswallon.¹ There was no silence after that, you may be sure. Some clapped their hands, but only

¹ Called by Caesar *Cassivelaunus*. What his real name may have been is unknown, but it was probably something like Caswallon.

a few, many hissed or groaned. There was not a man in all Britain so hated and feared as King Caswallon. He was never quiet, but always trying to get hold of something that belonged to his neighbours, or to do them a mischief in some way. Still, as I said, he was the only man, because there was no one else who had anything like the power, no one else who was great enough for the others to submit to him. People will obey a man whom they hate so long as they fear him;¹ but they won't obey one whom they despise. Well, there was much talking, but at last all agreed that King Caswallon was to be asked to take the chief command.

"By good luck we had some time to get our men together, for the Roman general had to go back to see after his ships, which had been damaged by a storm—so our spies told us. By the time he had finished looking after them, King Caswallon came up with his men. His cavalry and his chariots were the best in Britain, and we hoped that he would have better success than we had had. And so it turned out for a time. First there was a fight of cavalry, and the Roman horsemen followed our men so far into the woods that they were entangled. The King

¹ The old Briton seems to have had the same thought in his mind that the Roman writer had when he said, "Let them hate me if only they fear."

saw this and cut off a good many of them. A few days afterwards he found them quite off their guard. They were busy fortifying the camp, and seemed not to have any notion that we were in the neighbourhood. We crept up close to them under cover of the woods, which somehow they had forgotten to watch, and fell on the companies that were nearest to us. These we put to flight; two new companies, which we heard afterwards were reckoned to be the best soldiers they had, hardly did any better; we broke right through them, killing a good many, and carrying off the body of one of their chief officers. We lost hardly any of our men.

“There was one thing, you know, in which we had the better of them, and that was our chariots. These had great scythes fastened to their axles, and did a great deal of damage to the enemy. Our men used to drive them up at full gallop, and it was very seldom that they did not manage to break through the Roman line with them. I have seen a dozen chariots go clean through a division. After a time they got more used to them, for they were wonderfully brave men. Then they took to killing the horses. But to the very last, the first rush of the chariots made a great impression upon them.

“Of course we were greatly encouraged by our success. Unluckily, it made us too bold. A few

days afterwards we tried a regular pitched battle with the enemy, and were terribly beaten. As they had now a great number of cavalry, they pursued us a long way and killed a great many of our men. The next day half or more of those that escaped went away to their homes. They had had enough of fighting with the Romans.

“Very soon after this the Romans marched to the river Thames. That was then King Caswallon’s boundary on the south. It could only be forded in one place, and that not at all easily, the water was so deep and the stream so strong. Besides, to make it all the harder, a number of stakes had been driven into the bed of the river. I was not there at the time, but I heard what happened afterwards from some one who was present. They did not stop for a moment when they came to the water’s edge, though the stream was running strong, and the other bank was covered with men. They went into the river at a run, foot-soldiers and horse-soldiers mixed together. It was so deep that the men on foot had only their heads above the water. Even that did not stop them, nor, as you may suppose, did the men that were posted on the other bank. In fact, none of them stayed till the Romans got across. They said there was no standing against such wonderful soldiers.

“After this King Caswallon did not try to meet the

enemy in open fight again. He sent all his foot-soldiers home, keeping only some of the horsemen and chariots. With these he followed the Romans on their march. Neither man nor beast was left in the open country; all were driven into the woods; and as soon as ever a Roman soldier left the main body to get a little plunder or to look for provisions—and they had not much food beyond what they could get in this way—he was sure to be cut off. The King could not stop the enemy from going on; still, they lost many men in this way.

“However, they did our people a great deal more harm than we could do them. There was not a village anywhere near their line of march that was not burnt, nor a house or field that was not plundered, no, nor a fruit tree that was not cut down. Then some of our tribes began to fall off and make peace with the Romans. The first to do so were the Trinobantes. Caswallon had killed their king, and driven his son into banishment. They made a treaty with Caesar, sending him hostages, and a quantity of corn for his army. Others did the same. From some of their envoys the Romans learnt the way to Caswallon’s chief town. It was a difficult place to find, with woods and marshes all round it, but these traitors sent the Romans a guide. It was a strong place, as we had been used to reckon strong places, but the

Romans made very short work with it ; they attacked it on two sides at once, and the King's people did not wait for them, but made the best of their way out. The King and his tribe lost thousands of cattle there.

"Then Caswallon tried his last chance. He sent orders to the kings on the sea-coast that they were to try to destroy the ships. If that could be done Caesar would certainly have to go back. They did what they were ordered to do, but it was of no use. The fortification round the ships was too strong and too well protected. The kings were beaten back and lost many men.

"After this there was nothing left for Caswallon but to make peace. This he found easy enough, for Caesar was very anxious to get away, because he had heard bad news from the other side of the sea. The King had to give hostages, and he agreed to pay a tribute every year. Part of this tribute the Romans took away with them, but the rest they never got. Caesar had plenty to do in Gaul, as we heard from our friends and kinsmen over there, and though he sent once or twice to ask for what was owing, he never did anything else."

That was my grandfather's story. Well, the Romans never came again till about forty years ago, though I remember that there was talk about their coming once or twice when I was a young man.

CHAPTER IV.

KING CARACTACUS.

C. WELL, there is not much difference, after all, between your grandfather's story and what Julius wrote. I asked my teacher to let me read it all, for I had heard only parts of it before. He offered to lend me the book, but I was afraid to borrow it, lest it should come to some harm. He said that there was not another copy in all Britain, and that he should have to send to Lugdunum¹ in Gaul for it. Perhaps Julius makes one think that he did more in Britain than was really the case ; but on the whole his story agrees wonderfully well with your grandfather's. But now tell me what you yourself remember.

G. So I will. We were threatened by the Romans several times before they actually came. Once the Roman Emperor came as near as the opposite shore of Gaul. Our king Cunobelin had banished his son,

¹ Now Lyons. We know that there were booksellers at this time (about the end of the first century after Christ) at Lugdunum.

and the worthless fellow went to the Emperor and pretended to give up the kingdom to him—of course it was never his to give. The Emperor—he was more than half a madman I have been told—marched his legions down to the sea, drew them up in order of battle, and then set them to picking up shells. “Spoils of the ocean” he called them, and had them solemnly sent to Rome and laid up in the chief temple. Three years afterwards they came in earnest. The mad Emperor had been murdered, and his successor (Claudius) sent a very skilful general to carry on the war. In the year following he came himself, but stayed only a few days. King Cunobelin’s town was taken. That did not finish the war; there was fighting for several years in the south and west of the country. The last to hold out was the brave King Caractacus. He too was conquered in the end. The fact is, we Britons are not a match for these Romans. Man for man, we are as brave, and certainly taller and stronger. But then they have far better arms, and they are better disciplined. There was a great battle somewhere in the west. Our people had a very strong position. They were posted on a hill, with a thick wood on either side and a river in front. And there were three or four times as many of them as of the Romans. I have heard that the Roman general himself was afraid to attack; but the soldiers went on,

almost, I may say, in spite of him, and stormed the place. Our people, you see, had no breast-plates, and their wicker shields were not of much use against



ROMAN SOLDIERS CROSSING A RIVER.

a heavy Roman sword. And then their own swords and spears were mostly of bronze. You, my boy, are used to see everything made of iron, but it was not so at the time that I am speaking of, thirty or

forty years ago. Iron weapons cost so much that only the chiefs had them. The common people used bronze ; and bronze, I need not tell you, is no match for iron. Well, as I said, the King's camp was taken, and his wife and children with it. His brothers gave themselves up. As for the King himself, he managed to escape.

C. And what became of him ?

G. He took refuge with a neighbour, Queen of the Brigantes. She put him in prison, and gave him up to the Romans.

C. What a wicked woman !

G. Yes, indeed ; but what can you expect of a creature who sent away her husband, one of the best soldiers that ever was in Britain, and married the driver of her own chariot ?

C. And what did the Romans do with him ?

G. They behaved better to him than is their custom. He was taken to Rome and brought before the Emperor. I saw one of the soldiers who was on guard that day, and he told me the whole story. The Emperor sat on one seat, with the flags of the Roman legions round him, and his wife on another, just as if she were his equal. We Britons, you know, would as willingly have a queen as a king, but the Romans don't hold with us in that ; they don't take such account of women ; but this was one who thought

herself equal to any man, and her husband was, by all accounts, a very poor creature. Well, as I said, the King was brought, and told to answer for himself, he and his brothers and all his family. The rest threw themselves on the ground and begged for their lives. But he would not stoop to do such a thing. What he said was something like this: "If I had chosen to submit to you, I might have been your friend and not your prisoner to-day; but I preferred to be my own master. I thought that I was strong enough to be so; you have shown me that I was wrong, and you have the glory of it. And now, you can do what you will with me. If you kill me, there is nothing more to be said; if you pardon me, your generosity will never be forgotten." Pardoned he was; but they never let him come back to his own country. They were afraid, I suppose, that he would make trouble.

C. And you took no part in this war?

G. No; we had nothing to do with it. You see, when King Cunobelin's town was taken, my master, whose country was not far off—it lies to the north, as you know—thought it best to make terms with the new-comers. I and three other chiefs were sent as ambassadors to the Roman generals with presents and hostages. The Romans always asked for hostages, and a good plan it is for what they want. Ah! they have a clever way of managing the people they

have to do with. But it is a terrible thing for those who have to give them. My own son—my second boy—was one of them. He was taken away to Italy, and died, I heard, of a fever, about a year afterwards. They put a tribute upon us. However, it was not very heavy, and, anyhow, we had peace and quiet as long as we paid it. As for the King, my master, he was fairly charmed with the strangers. He went to Rome, and when he came back, nothing would satisfy him but he must have everything in Roman fashion. Ah! if he could only have foreseen what was to come! Happily for him, the trouble, as you will hear, came after his days.

CHAPTER V.

BOADICEA.

ONE thing that my master learnt at Rome was this. It seems that many rich men leave part of their money to the Emperor, and the rest to their wives and children, or, it may be, to other relatives and friends. They think that if the Emperor gets a share for himself, he will, for very shame, let the

others have what belongs to them. Well, this was how my master arranged matters. The Emperor was to have a third of all his property ; his wife, Queen Boadicea, was to have the same, and his daughters the same. Poor man ! he was sadly mistaken if he thought that this would do them any good. As soon as the breath was out of his body, the Roman officers broke into the house. They must see, forsooth, that the Emperor had his proper share. I can't tell you the wicked and shameful things they did. They plundered the whole place ; they beat the Queen most cruelly with rods ; even that was not the worst. Then the whole country broke out into a blaze of fury. As you may suppose, this was not the first wickedness or cruelty that the Romans had done ; there was scarcely a village that had not suffered something at their hands. The Queen went through the country calling the people to arms, and they flocked in thousands after her. Other tribes joined us, and before that moon was out we had full twenty thousand fighting men. It was just the right time for us to make an effort. Almost the whole of the Roman army had been taken away by the Governor on an expedition against the Island of the Priests—it lies a little way off the western coast—and our part of the country was left almost without a single soldier. I myself thought that the time

was come, though I ought to have known better. Sooner or later, the Romans were bound to beat us. However, at first everything went well ; we began by marching against Camalodunum. It is, as you know, what they call a colony, a place to which old soldiers are sent when their time is up. They are half soldiers and half farmers, living in the town, and farming the land round it, or rather making the people to whom it once belonged farm it for them. There had been a new batch of them just come to the place, and indeed it was the lawless doings of these new arrivals that had been the cause of a great deal of the trouble. They were not in the least prepared for our coming. The walls had never been finished ; in fact they had scarcely been begun. A walled town, you see, is not pleasant to live in, and they had no idea but what they were perfectly safe. They would have as soon expected their very cattle to turn against them as the people of whom they had made slaves. Before long, deserters from the town came into our camp. They told us that the whole place was full of confusion and fear. It was not only the rebellion that made them afraid : there had been signs of some great trouble to come. The statue of Victory that stood in the great square of the town had fallen down, with its face turned in a strange way, just as if it had tried to fly. Curious

sounds had been heard in the senate-house, and dead bodies had been found on the sea-shore when the tide was down. All this encouraged us, just as much as it discouraged them. They told us, too, that they had sent to the nearest station for help, and



ROMAN SOLDIERS FORTIFYING A PLACE.

the officer in command could let them have no more than a couple of hundred men, and these only half armed. No one tried to stop us on the way, and when we came to the town, we had only to walk in. The walls, as I told you, were little more than

begun. There was only one strong place in the town, and that was the Temple of the Emperor.

C. What do you mean, grandfather, by "the Temple of the Emperor"?

G. Why, they make gods of their emperors when they are dead. Indeed they do something like it while they are still alive. So they had made a god of Claudius—that was the Emperor, you know, who conquered King Cunobelin—and built a temple to him, and had priests who sacrificed to him. That, by the way, was one of their ways of robbing us. They appointed the rich men in the country priests of the Emperor, and made them pay so much for the honour as pretty nearly to ruin them. Well, as I said, this temple was the one strong place in the town, and it might have been made, with scarcely any trouble, very strong indeed. But nothing had been done; there was neither ditch nor rampart, only the bare walls. No one would have thought that they were old soldiers, who ought to have known all about these things. They hadn't even sent away the women and children. The temple was crowded with helpless people. The soldiers could hardly have moved for them. And, of course, the provisions could not have held out for any time. Anyhow, the place was taken on the second day. That night there was not a house standing or a soul living in all the colony.

Oh, boy, it was an awful sight ; I hope that I shall never see another such.

The same night our spies—of course we had spies everywhere, as the whole country was friendly to us—brought us the news that a Roman legion was on its way to relieve the colony. They knew nothing about its having been destroyed, for, naturally, while we heard everything they heard nothing. So we laid an ambush for them in a wood, about five miles from the colony, through which they would have to pass. They came marching along without any scouts in front, just as if there was not an enemy within fifty miles. We rushed out on them, and it was all over in less than an hour. Hardly a single infantry soldier escaped, and we took no prisoners. The general and his horsemen had to ride for their lives. The next day we began our march on London. When we had got about half way our scouts came racing up with the news that the Roman legions were on their way back. I was with the Queen when she heard it. I saw her eyes lighten. “Good,” she said, “we will serve them as we served the legion to-day. March on.” We marched, the people flocking in with arms in their hands at every village that we reached. We expected, of course, to find the Romans at London. It was by far the richest town in the province—what it is now does not give you any idea of what it was

then—and we felt sure that the Governor would not let us get possession of it without a fight. But he did, and it was very well for him that he did. If he had tried to keep it, his army must have been destroyed. It was far too small to defend so big a place. I heard afterwards that the London merchants—Roman citizens many of them—begged and prayed him to stand by them, but he would not. All that he could do for them, he said, was to let the able-bodied men come with him. All their wealth beyond what they could carry, all the old and the sick, and the greater part of the women and children were left. Well, I don't like to think of what happened. I would give a good deal if I could forget it. Enough to say that what had happened to Camalodunum happened to London. It was said that seventy thousand poor creatures perished, many of them our own countrymen too, for no other fault than that they had made friends with the Romans. Of course our people had a great many wrongs to avenge, but to do it in such a fashion—and what that fashion was I should not like to tell you—was too horrible. Another Roman town about twenty miles from London was destroyed, and then came the end. Of course the Queen could not keep her army together for a very long time. They ate up everything in the country round, and indeed were in a fair way to be as much hated by the people

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as the Romans themselves. It was necessary for her to get back to her own capital, and to do that she had to fight, for the Governor had posted himself in a strong place on the way. But I must put off telling you what happened to another day.

CHAPTER VI.

BOADICEA (*continued*).

C. You promised, grandfather, to finish the story of the Queen.

G. You shall hear it, though it was a miserable business from beginning to end. Well, after the Roman towns had been destroyed, many of our people, not so much the Queen's own tribe as those that had joined in afterwards, began to slip away with their plunder. I dare say some of them hoped to get off free whatever might happen. However, there were quite enough left to do all that was wanted. Indeed, to tell you the truth, I believe that we should have fared much better if we had had only half the number. A great mob of all sorts such as we had,

many of them with more of the robber than the soldier in them, was not good for much. It was too confident at first, and too easily frightened afterwards. However, we did not think so then. You see we had never really tried what the Roman soldiers were like. The legion we destroyed on the way to London was taken by surprise, and had no chance of showing what it was like. After that there had been no fighting at all, only plundering and slaying helpless people. And we certainly seemed to be more than a match for them. Our scouts told us that the Governor had no more than ten thousand men. He had sent—so they said—to the commander of a camp in the west to bring all the troops that he could spare, and the man had refused. That encouraged us, as you may suppose, not a little. Some of the Romans, we could see, were afraid.

C. But what a foolish thing for him to do, grandfather!

G. Yes, indeed, my boy. What could he have hoped to do if the main body had been destroyed? He killed himself afterwards, so ashamed was he of having been so cowardly and foolish. However, as I said, it gave us no little confidence. There was scarcely one among us but believed that there would not be a Roman soldier alive at the end of the day. Soon after daybreak we were ready for the battle.

Before we moved forward the Queen drove in her chariot through the army, and spoke to every division—it was divided, you must understand, by tribes, and not a little jealousy and quarrelling was there about places.

C. What was she like, grandfather?

G. The very noblest-looking woman that I ever saw. She was taller than most men—indeed there were not many in the whole army that overtopped her. There was a stern look on her face, and a fierce light in her eyes, though I can remember a time when she was as sweet and gentle a lady as there was in Britain. But many things had happened since then. Her hair was of rich golden red, and fell in great waves down to her hips. Round her head it was kept together by a circlet of gold. She had a tunic, with crossbars of bright colours on it—you seldom see such a thing now that the Roman dress is so much in fashion—and a military cloak over her shoulders. In her right hand she held a spear.

C. Can you remember what she said, grandfather?

G. Every word, and shall to the day of my death, or as long, at least, as I remember anything. But I shall not repeat it. What good would it be if I did? The Romans are our masters, and it is best to be content with them. Anyhow they are the best that we are likely to find. But you shall hear the last

thing that she said, because it was so like her. "We must conquer," she said, "nor do I see how we can fail. But if not, what then? DIE, that is what a *woman* means to do ; I leave it to *men* to live and be slaves."

The Queen had left her own people to the last ; and as the division to which I belonged was on the extreme right of the army—she began her progress through the divisions at the left—when she had finished her speech to us the battle began. Our men rushed forward helter-skelter, as if they were going to simply run over the enemy, as a herd of cattle might run over a man. And there was such a cloud of javelins, darts, arrows, stones, as, I should think, had never been seen before. The Romans simply stood where they were, and bore it. They held their shields over their heads, but no man moved an inch from his place. If a man was struck down—and though hundreds of missiles missed where one hit, some of them were ; I myself saw several fall—the gap was filled up in a moment. This went on for about an hour. By the end of that time we had spent all our stock of breath and of weapons. Then there happened something that I suppose no one had looked for. The legion charged. It was in close order, something like a wedge, and marched, I may say, like one man. There was no standing against it.

It broke through our loose ranks as a hatchet breaks through a piece of wood. And then their light-armed soldiers and their horsemen finished what the legion had begun, for they cut down those that fled, or tried to fly, for it was very hard to get away from the battle-field. There were rows of wagons in our rear, in



ROMAN SOLDIERS IN BATTLE.

which the women and children were carried. Poor things! they had come to see a fine sight, as they thought. But it turned out to be something very, very different.

C. And what happened to the Queen?

G. It was no fault of hers that she did not die on the field of battle. If a woman ever sought for death,

she did. But it was not to be. Towards the end of the day she was wounded, and fainted with loss of blood. While she was in this state her charioteer drove her off the field. It was a long time before she rightly came to herself. When she did she would have killed herself; but her servants put everything out of her reach. You see they wanted to make favour with the Romans by giving her up to them. The Governor would have paid a high price, no doubt, if he could have got hold of her alive. Of course you have read in your histories about the Roman triumphs, as they call them. It would have been a fine thing for the Governor to take such a woman as the Queen through the streets of Rome. I doubt whether they had ever seen her like before. However, they did not get their way. She managed to get at some poison, and killed herself in that way.

C. So that was the end of the great Queen! And now tell me about my own people.

G. Your grandfather was killed in the battle, and I was taken prisoner. We were in the same chariot. Of course I never expected or indeed wished for anything but death. But they spared my life; I had been able to save a few people when London was sacked, and they were grateful for it. One of them in particular, a very rich knight, made great interest

with the Governor for me. He found it a very hard matter, for Paulinus—that was the Governor's name—was as hard and stern as a man could be. But Paulinus was recalled, and some one less stern and strict was sent out in his place. Then I received my pardon, and with it a share of my property, which, of course, had been confiscated. At the time I would sooner have died, but afterwards I was reconciled to life. My son, your grandfather that is, had left a daughter, who was then a girl of ten years old or so. It was a great comfort to me to have her with me; she was all that was left to me, for my second son had died, as I told you, in Italy. When she was eighteen, she married a Roman officer, who had bought some property in the island. I thought that I should spend my last days with her and her husband, but it was not to be. The year after their marriage there were awful troubles all over the world, and they reached even to our poor home out here.¹ First the Emperor at Rome was killed, or rather driven to kill himself. Then the general that was chosen to come after him was murdered by the soldiers in the streets of Rome. The soldiers of Rome put up an Emperor of their own, but the army in Germany would not have him, and chose their own general. He won the victory, after some very fierce fighting. And then the army in the

¹ This was the year 69 A.D.

East had their turn. Why should not they have their Emperor, they said, as well as any one else ? And it so happened that they had a really good man at their head. Vespasian was his name. Many years before he had been a soldier in this country, and had distinguished himself very much, and my son-in-law had served under him then, and had got to like and admire him very much. And now, as soon as he heard what had happened, nothing would content him but that he must hurry over to Italy, and do what he could to help his old chief. I could not blame him, but all the same I wished with all my heart that the thought had never entered into his mind. But he was ambitious, I suppose, as well as grateful. He had thought that he was content to farm, and hunt, and fish, but it was not so ; as soon as he had the chance of something more he took it. Well, there was some sharp fighting in Italy before Vespasian's party won the day, and my granddaughter's husband went through all of it without getting as much as a scratch. And just in the last battle of all, at the very end of the day, when they were making their way into Rome, he was killed by a wounded man, who struck at him from the ground. The news killed my poor granddaughter. You were born on the day when it arrived, and she just lived long enough to kiss you.

Now, my dear boy, you will not wonder that I do not altogether love these Romans. Still, they are here, and you must make the best of them. My time is short, and the future does not concern me ; but you have your time to live, and the better friends you are with your masters, the more you will prosper.

PART II.
IN SAXON TIMES.



CHAPTER VII.

THE STORY OF VORTIGERN.

THERE had been a battle at the Ford of the river Wye between Griffith, one of the Princes of Wales, and the West Saxons. The Welsh had won the day, not a little by the help of the young Prince Constantine, who had come from the British kingdom of Cumbria, in the hope of marrying the sister of Prince Griffith. As they sat at the feast after the battle, the talk of the chiefs turned upon the old days when the Britons dwelt in peace in their land before the Saxons from the Eastern seas had come to vex them.

“Tell me,” said Prince Constantine, turning to Hoel the minstrel, “tell me how these troubles began. I have heard the tale as it is told in my own country, and I would willingly hear it as it is told in yours.”

“Prince,” said Hoel, “I can refuse nothing to so valiant a fighter ; but it is a tale of sorrow and wrong, and ill suited for a feast.”

"Speak on," said Constantine; "your story shall teach us to grow wiser and better."

"Know then," said Hoel, "that for a time after the Romans left us, things went well in Britain."

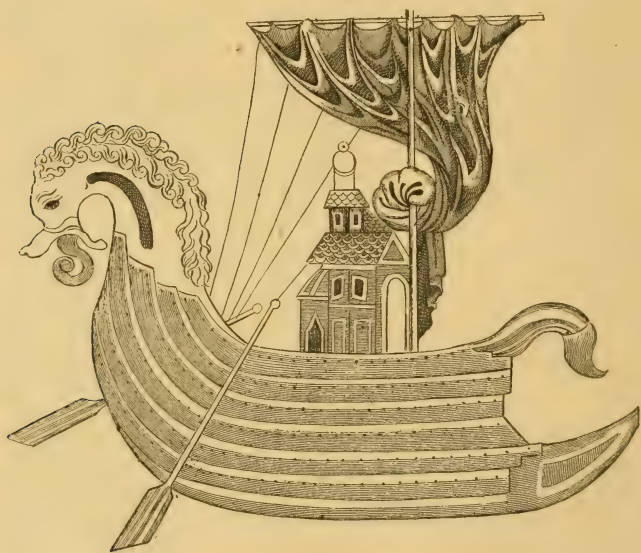
"Stay," cried the Prince, "you must pardon my ignorance; but tell me why these Romans left us. Did we drive them out?"

"Not so," answered the minstrel; "they needed their armies elsewhere, for they were themselves hard pressed by their enemies. Well, as I said, things for a time went well. But our fathers had forgotten how to fight, nor did they rightly know how to govern themselves. And hence came our troubles. These began with King Constans, a good man, doubtless, but one who, having been a monk, cared little for the things of this world, and committed all the affairs of his nation to a certain noble, Vortigern by name. This man was possessed with a great ambition, having it in his mind to become King himself. To this end he laid his plans. First he asked the King to give him the charge of his treasures and of his strong cities. 'Your enemies, Sir,' he said, 'have the purpose of invading Britain, and I would keep these things safe for you.' The King granted him his request, not suspecting any evil; but Vortigern put into these strong places men of his own choosing, who would be ready to do what he desired. Next he said to the

King, 'I hear that the Picts¹ are about to attack us, bringing with them allies from beyond the sea. Now my counsel is that you increase the number of your own guard.' 'Do as you will,' answered the King. 'Have I not left all things to you?' 'Then,' said Vortigern, 'the best men that we can have for this purpose are the Picts themselves. I will hire a hundred of them, for they will not only serve as a guard, but will also spy upon their own countrymen, if they should have any design against us.' Constans consenting, as he consented to all things, Vortigern hired these Picts, receiving them into the King's household, and feeding them sumptuously, and giving them many gifts. After he had thus won their hearts, he said to them, 'I have it in my mind to leave this island of Britain, and to look for a better estate elsewhere. Here my revenues are so small that I cannot support even fifty men, much less a hundred.' The Picts said to one another, 'Why do we suffer this man to live? Why do we not kill him, that Vortigern, who is far worthier than he, may have his crown?' Thereupon they broke into the chamber of the King, and slew him. His head they cut off, and carried it to Vortigern. But he, pretending that the thing was done without his knowledge, commanded that they should be bound and put to death. There were some,

¹ The inhabitants of Northern Britain.

however, who believed that he was guilty in this matter. The Picts also desired to avenge the slaying of their countrymen. And besides these things, the young brothers of King Constans, who had been carried



A SAXON SHIP.

across the sea by their tutors when the King was killed, were now preparing to return and to claim their kingdom by force of arms. Thus it came to pass that Vortigern was in great straits. Being in this condition, he heard that three galleys, full of

armed men, had come to the coast of Kent, under the command of two chiefs, Hengist and Horsa by name. Vortigern commanded that these strangers should be brought into his presence. When they had come, he asked them of what country they were, and for what purpose they had visited his kingdom. The chiefs made this answer, 'It is the custom in our country, that from time to time, when the number of our people is greater than the land can feed, our princes gather all the youth of the nation into one place. This being done, they cast lots who shall go into other lands wherein they may earn their own livelihood. This year the lot fell upon us, and we are come hither to offer you our service.'

"To this Vortigern answered, 'I am rejoiced at your coming. I am hard pressed by many enemies. If, therefore, you will help me against them, I will entertain you honourably in my kingdom, will give you good wages for the present, and will settle you hereafter on lands which you can cultivate for yourselves.'

"To this the new-comers gave their consent. Not many days afterwards the Picts invaded Britain with a great army, and Vortigern went against them with his men, taking with him the Saxons, for so the strangers were named. In the battle that was fought the Britons had scarcely need to do anything, for the

Saxons, by their own strength, turned the Picts to flight. Vortigern now gave to the Saxons certain lands in the east country. Thereupon Hengist said to him, 'You have yet many enemies, my lord. Shall I send for more of my countrymen, for of a surety we shall need them?' 'Send for as many as you will,' said Vortigern, 'they will all be welcome.' Then Hengist spake further: 'I have yet another thing to ask. You have given us land sufficient; suffer us also to build a fortress, which may be called after my name, for this is an honour which is my due, seeing that you or yours commonly possess it.' Vortigern answered, 'This may not be; you are strangers and pagans, and know not the customs of the land. Were I myself inclined to it, my nobles would not suffer it.'

"To this Hengist answered, 'Give me so much as this, O King, to wit a piece of land so large as may be surrounded by a bull's hide, with which I may do what I will.'

"'Let it be so,' said Vortigern.

"Then Hengist cut up a bull's hide into thongs; these he fastened together in one piece, and surrounded with it a piece of land which he had chosen for himself as being the most strongly placed in the whole country. This was afterwards called Thong Castle.

"After this the messengers which Hengist had sent

to his own country returned, bringing with them eighteen ships full of the bravest soldiers that they could find. These the King took into his service ; and at the same time went to see the castle which Hengist had built for himself. Being here entertained at a royal banquet, he was waited upon by Hengist's daughter, Rowena, for she had come with the fresh company of warriors, having been sent for by her father. She had come out of her chamber, carrying in her hand a golden cup full of wine. This she offered to the King, making at the same time a low courtesy, and saying, ' Lord King, I will drink your health ! ' Then she drank to his health, and the King also drank to her. Now Rowena was very fair, and the King loved her greatly, so that he would have her father give her to him for wife. This Hengist, by the advice of his lords, consented to do. ' Only,' he said, ' you must give me for her your kingdom of Kent.' This the King consented to do, bringing upon himself thereby great hatred from his nobles and from his three sons, for he had three by his former marriage that were now grown to manhood.

" And now more and more of the Saxons came from over the sea, the King either inviting them, or at the least suffering them. At this the Britons were so much disturbed that they took away his kingdom from him, and set Vortimer his eldest son to rule in

his stead. Vortimer was a very brave and skilful soldier, and conquered the heathen in many battles till they were well-nigh driven out of the country. But this worthy Prince was cut off in the flower of his days, for his step-mother Rowena contrived that a draught of poison should be given to him, from which draught he died.

“When Vortimer was dead, the Britons restored the kingdom to Vortigern, and he, his wife urging him, sent a message to Hengist that he should return to Britain. ‘Only,’ he said, ‘come back with a small company of men, lest there should be strife between you and my people.’ But Hengist took no heed to this counsel, but brought as great a multitude of men as he could by any means gather together. At this King Vortigern and his people were greatly troubled, and were resolved to oppose them by force of arms. Of this resolve Hengist heard by means of his daughter, and thought how to deceive the Britons and their King. This they did in this fashion. A messenger came to Vortigern and said, ‘Hengist has brought all his host with him, thinking that Vortimer was yet alive, and being minded to make himself secure against their attacks. But now that he knows for certain that Vortimer is dead, he submits himself and his people to your arbitration. Cause such as you will to stay, and send such as you will away.’

“ This pleased Vortigern, for being ruled by Rowena his wife, he desired that Hengist should remain in Britain. It was therefore agreed that the chiefs of Britain and the Saxons should meet together at a certain place that is now called Amesbury, for the settling of these matters. But Hengist commanded his followers to hide long knives under their garments, and when he should say the words, ‘ *Draw your daggers !* ’ to slay each man his neighbour. Thereupon whilst they were talking together Hengist got hold of Vortigern by the cloak and cried, ‘ *Draw your daggers !* ’ Thereupon the Saxons fell upon the princes of Britain, who suspected no such thing, and so carried no arms, and slew them to the number of four hundred and sixty.

“ As for Vortigern, Hengist did not slay him, but kept him in prison, nor would release him till he had yielded up as the price of his liberty all the chief and strongest places in Britain. As for this unhappy Prince, when he was released he departed into the western parts of the island, much repenting that he had brought the heathen Saxons into the island of Britain. Nor did he escape due punishment, for Ambrosius, son of Constans, having been anointed King over Britain, sought to avenge upon him his father’s death. And this he did, for having found him shut up in a very strong tower, and failing to

take the place in any other way, set fire to it and consumed it and all that were in it. Thus did Vortigern die."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STORY OF KING ARTHUR.

"YOU said truly," cried Prince Constantine, when Hoel had brought his tale to an end, "that you had a sad story to tell. Let us now, if the hour be not too late, nor you over weary, hear something of a more cheerful kind. Tell us about the great King Arthur."

"Most willingly," answered the minstrel; "were the night altogether spent, and I worn out with weariness, yet I could not refuse to speak of Arthur the Flower of Kings.

"When Ambrosius, son of Constans, was dead, his brother Uther reigned in his place. When Uther's wife was about to bear him a child, the wise man Merlin, knowing that this child would be a son, and would grow to be a great king that should deliver Britain, prayed the King that the child might be delivered to him so soon as it was born. For he

knew by his art that this was the best thing that could be done for the child. The babe, therefore, was wrapped in cloth of gold, and delivered by two ladies, to whom the King had given this command, into the hands of Merlin himself, who was standing at the castle-gate in the disguise of a poor man. Merlin carried the babe to a priest, who christened him by the name of Arthur. This done he took him to the house of a certain knight, Sir Hector. Sir Hector's wife nourished him, and there he lived many years, being reckoned as one of Sir Hector's children, for none knew who he was in truth, save only Merlin and the King.

"Uther, having fought bravely with the Saxons, who all this time were spreading their power more and more over Britain, became so sick that he was ready to die. His knights came to Merlin, and inquired whether there was any remedy for the King's sickness? Merlin made answer—

"'Remedy there is none; this sickness is to death. Nevertheless, be ye present all of you to-morrow, for the King will speak before he die.'

"So on the morrow all the knights came and stood by the King's bedside. Then Merlin said with a loud voice, 'My lord, is it thy will that thy son Arthur shall be King after thee?' Uther turned him about, and said in the hearing of them all, 'I will; the

blessing of God and my blessing be upon him.' And having said this, he died.

"The nobles and knights, when they had buried the King, departed each to his own country. Each assembled as many men as he could, desiring to obtain the kingdom for himself, for they said, 'Who is this Arthur of whom the wizard Merlin speaks? Is he indeed son to King Uther? And even if he be, why should a boy rule over us?' So they were divided among themselves, and the Saxons prevailed still more, wasting the land on every side.

"Seeing this, the chief Bishop in Britain, by Merlin's counsel, called together all the nobles and knights, that they might learn who was ordained of God to be King of Britain. Being gathered together, therefore, they prayed for a sign, and suddenly there was seen before the door of the church a great stone with a sword in the midst of it, and on the sword was written in letters of gold, 'Whoso pulleth out the sword from this stone is rightful King of Britain.' Many tried to pull it out, but none could move it even a little. Then ten knights were chosen to watch the stone and the sword.

"After these things a great tournament was held, to which among others came Sir Hector with his eldest son Sir Key, and Arthur also, who passed for Sir Hector's son. It so chanced that Sir Key found that

he had come without any sword. Turning, therefore, to his brother Arthur, for such he thought him to be, he said, 'I pray thee, fetch me my sword.' So Arthur rode back with all haste to the house, but found it locked. Whereupon he said to himself, 'I will take the sword that is by the church-door, for my brother shall not go without a sword to-day.' So he came to the church. Now the knights that had been set to watch the stone and the sword had gone all of them to the tournament; so Arthur, knowing nothing of the matter, took the sword by its handle and lightly pulled it from its place. Not once or twice only but many times was this trial made, for the nobles and knights would not believe that this lad was their rightful King. But the end was always the same; none but Arthur could put the sword back into its place, or pull it therefrom. So at last, with consent of all the people, he was crowned King.

"And now, being established in his kingdom, he set himself to overthrow the Saxons, who had taken the occasion of the divisions among the people of Britain to advance their power more and more. First he rode with all his hosts to York, where Colgrin the Saxon lay with a great army. With him he fought a great battle, in which many were slain on both sides; at the last he drove Colgrin into the city and there besieged him. Then came Colgrin's brother Baldulph

with six thousand men, to help him ; but Arthur fell on him unawares, and scattered his enemies. Nevertheless Baldulph made his way into the city, for he shaved his head, and disguised himself as a jester, and so passed through King Arthur's camp, and on



SAXON WARRIORS.

coming to the walls, was drawn up by ropes into the city.

“After a while there came news to the King, as he watched the city, that there had come six hundred ships, and had landed a countless army of Saxons on the eastern coast of Britain. So the King left besieging York, and marched to meet them, having with him his nephew Hoel, King of the Britons that live in Gaul. The Saxons were now besieging Lincoln.

There Arthur fell upon them, and after a fierce battle defeated them, killing more than six thousand men. Those that remained fled into a wood that was close by, and there defended themselves bravely. But when the King, having cut down the trees, had made a barricade and so shut them in, they asked for peace. And when they had agreed to give up all the gold and silver that they had, and to sail away in empty ships, promising that they would never return, and giving also hostages for the fulfilment of this promise, the King suffered them to depart. But when they had been but a few hours at sea, they repented them of what they had done. They did not indeed return to the place which they had left, but sailed southward and westward, landing at last in Devonshire. Thence they marched inland, ravaging as they went, till they came to the town of Bath.

“When the King heard of their falsehood he was very wroth, and swore a great oath that he would not rest till he had driven these deceivers out of Britain. Then he marched with all his forces to Bath.

“When he came to the place he dressed himself in his armour. On his head he put a helmet adorned with a dragon of gold ; he girded himself with his sword Excalibur, and in his hand he took the great spear that he called Ron. Having done this he put his men in order, and led them out against the enemy,

who had taken up their place on the side of Badon Hill. All that day the two armies fought, but the Saxons stood their ground, nor could King Arthur, for all his fierceness, drive them from their place. That night both the hosts lay down upon the hill.

"The next day the King led his army again to the attack, and this time he drove the Saxons before him till he gained the top of the hill. From that he drove them again down the other side till they were utterly scattered. Thus did King Arthur that day deliver Britain.

"Of the other things that the King and his knights accomplished, and how at the last he was overcome by treachery, I have not now time to tell, for the night is far spent, and chiefs who have fought as ye fought to-day must sorely need rest."

So Hoel ended his tale.

We need not ask how far the minstrel's story was true. Perhaps, like most minstrels' tales, it was half poetry; but such tales kept alive among the Britons the recollection of the times of confusion which followed the departure of the Romans, and the memory of a great British chief, who stopped for a while the progress of the Saxons in the West of England.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW ENGLAND BECAME CHRISTIAN.

WHATEVER success the Britons may have had, it did not last very long. The English, Saxons, Jutes, and others—afterwards all called English—came pouring over from the countries about the mouths of the Elbe in North Germany, and the Britons could not stand against these daring sailors and fierce warriors. Fifty years after the battle of Badon Hill the Britons had been driven to the western side of the island, and all the rest of England, and part of the South of Scotland, belonged to the invaders.¹

The Romans during the latter part of their stay in Britain had become Christians, and the Britons, who

¹ The Britons at this time had Cornwall, Devonshire, and the greater part of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire. This was called West Wales. They had also what we now call Wales, and with it Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, Shropshire, Cheshire, and a small part of the counties of Worcester and Gloucester. This was North Wales. In the North they had Lancashire, the hilly country in North-West Yorkshire, Cumberland, and Westmoreland. This went by the name of Cumbria.

imitated their masters in everything, were Christian too. But the English, Saxons, and Jutes were all heathen, and now the greater part of Britain, which had been Christian, was turned again to heathenism. I must now tell you how these brave heathen were converted.

In the year of our Lord 572 or thereabouts, Ethelbert, King of Kent, who was the most powerful prince in the southern parts of England, married a certain Bertha, daughter of the King of Paris. Ethelbert was a heathen, as all the English folk were in those days, but he promised that his wife, being a Christian, should be allowed to worship God in her own way. More than this, he permitted a certain bishop from France to come with her, and he gave them a church in Canterbury, which was the chief town of his dominions. This church had been built by the Romans, before they left the island.

About eight years after these things happened, a certain Roman named Gregory had his heart wonderfully turned to the work of preaching the gospel in this country. He was a man of noble birth and of great wealth, and he had founded a monastery in Rome, named after St. Andrew, of which monastery he was himself the abbot or chief. One day, as he walked through the market-place of the city, he saw among the various kinds of merchandise three boys, who

were to be sold for slaves. They were of a fair complexion, with long flaxen hair, things to be noted in a country where the folk are mostly dark. Struck with pity for their hard lot, he asked of the slave-merchant from what land they came.

SLAVE-MERCHANT. "From Britain, where all the people have this same fair complexion."

GREGORY. "Are the people of this strange country Christians or Pagans?"

SLAVE-M. "They are Pagans."

GREGORY (*heaving a deep sigh*). "Sad is it to think that creatures so full of light should be slaves of the Prince of Darkness! But say, of what nation are they?"

SLAVE-M. "They are *Angli*."

GREGORY. "*Angli!* Rightly are they called *Ang(e)li*, for their faces are as the faces of angels, and they should with the angels be fellow-heirs of the kingdom of heaven. But from what province of this island of Britain do they come?"

SLAVE-M. "From Deira."¹

GREGORY. "It is well again. They are delivered from the ire of God (*de ira*=from the ire or anger) and called to His mercy. And who is the King of this region?"

¹ "Deira" was a region of Northern Britain which may be described as being between the Tyne and the Humber. It would include, therefore, Durham and Yorkshire.

SLAVE-M. "Ella is his name."

GREGORY. "Then Alleluia shall be chanted in his kingdom."

The abbot went straight from the market-place to the Bishop of Rome, and begged permission to go and preach the gospel to the inhabitants of this far-away island. The Bishop granted the request, and Gregory set out. He knew, it would seem, that his going would not be liked by his fellow-citizens. Accordingly, he made his departure as secret as possible. But what he had expected happened. As soon as the people missed him, they burst in upon the Bishop, as he was worshipping in the church of St. Peter, and demanded with loud cries that their beloved Gregory should be given back to them. The Bishop had to yield ; messengers were sent after Gregory, and overtaking him at the end of his third day's journey compelled him to return.

The good abbot never forgot his purpose of bringing his dear "Angels" to the knowledge of Christ ; but he had to wait a long time before he could carry it out. Ten years after he saw the three fair-haired boys in the market-place, he was himself made Bishop of Rome. That seemed to make the thing more hopeless than ever, for the times were full of trouble, and Gregory had work without end to do at home. Then it seems to have occurred to him,

that what he could not do himself he might do by means of another. Accordingly he chose out forty men from among the monks of his old monastery, and putting the prior,¹ whose name was Augustine, at their head, sent them to preach in Britain.

Augustine and his company set out on their journey, but when they got as far as the South of France their hearts failed them. Every one gave them terrible accounts of the Pagans that had come over and conquered the island of Britain. Nowhere, it was said, was there a people so savage and barbarous. The missionaries stopped on their way, and sent their leader Augustine back to Rome, with a petition to Gregory that he would release them from their task.

Gregory refused to listen. He was one of the men who do not spare themselves any trouble or danger, and expect others to be like themselves. He sent Augustine back with a letter full of exhortation. "Do not shrink," he said, "from your duty. Go on, with God to help you. The harder the work, the greater the reward." At the same time he gave them letters to the bishops of France, who were told to give them all the help they could. The company started again, and made their way to the sea-coast. There they provided themselves with

¹ Next to the abbot.

interpreters who knew the English tongue, and crossing the Channel, landed at Ebbe's Fleet in the Isle of Thanet.

As soon as they were on shore they sent a messenger to King Ethelbert. They had come, they told him, with good news, news of glory in heaven, and of a kingdom that should have no end in the presence of God.



MONKS BEARING A CROSS.

The King sent back a friendly answer. "I shall be glad to see and talk with you. But do not come for the present beyond the river Stour."¹

Though he was thus disposed to be friendly with the new-comers, he was greatly afraid of them. He even made a point of not meeting them in any house, but in the open air. Under a roof they might put a magical spell upon him. In the open air, he thought, he would be more safe. Accordingly he arranged

¹ The Stour flows between Canterbury and the Isle of Thanet. Thanet in those days was much more of an island than it is now.

that the first meeting should take place under an oak, a tree which his own people held to be sacred.

Augustine and his companions came up from the



SAXON KING IN COUNCIL.

shore in solemn procession. One attendant carried in front a silver cross; another followed behind holding up a picture, done in colours and gold, of the Crucified Christ. As the missionaries moved along, they chanted a solemn prayer for themselves and for the people to whom they came to preach.



Augustine then declared the message which he had to deliver. He could himself speak

no language but Latin, while the King and his people knew only their own English tongue. But the interpreters whom the missionaries had brought with them translated the preacher's words as he went on. Augustine explained the picture, telling his hearers how the Son of the One God in heaven had come down to earth, had died for the sins of a guilty world, and had thus opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

When the preacher had finished, the King made a very friendly answer. "You promise good things," he said, "but there is much in what you say that I do not understand, nor can I engage to give up at once the customs of my fathers. Nevertheless, you are welcome; you are free to worship God in your own way; if any of my subjects wish to follow you, I will not hinder them."

After this the missionaries formed another procession, and again chanting solemn prayers, marched to the royal town of Canterbury, where they took up their abode in dwellings which the King gave over to their use. The more the King heard of their teaching and saw of their holy life, the more moved he was. In the end, before a year had passed from their coming, he declared his conversion. On Whitsunday, the second day of June, in the year 597, he was baptized. His people soon followed his example. On Christmas

Day in the same year ten thousand converts were baptized in the Swale, at the northern end, where it joins the Medway.¹

CHAPTER X.

HOW ENGLAND BECAME CHRISTIAN (*continued*).

BUT how about the “Angels” of Deira, for Deira was a long way from Ethelbert’s kingdom of Kent?

Many years—nearly fifty from the day when the three fair-haired boys stood in the market-place of Rome—were to pass before they heard the good news of the Saviour Christ. King Ella, whose name had made Gregory think of the word Alleluia, died about three years before Augustine came to England. He left a son, Edwin by name, but this son did not succeed him in his kingdom, which was seized by a powerful noble of the land. Edwin had to fly for his life, and took refuge at the court of a certain Redwald, King of East Anglia. This was more than

¹ The Swale is a channel which divides the Isle of Sheppey from the mainland. The spot is probably near what is now called Queenborough.

twenty years after his father's death. Redwald was, in a way, a Christian ; perhaps King Ethelbert, who was his over-lord, had compelled him to make a profession of belief. But he was not single-hearted, for he still kept the temples of the false gods open. The usurping King of Deira sent messengers to Redwald, with promises of reward if he would give up Edwin to him, and threats of war if he should refuse. Redwald was almost persuaded either to kill his guest or to give him up to his enemies. Edwin knew the danger he was in. A friend had told him what the King was thinking of, and had promised to tell him of a safer place of refuge. But Edwin would not listen to him. He said that he did not believe that King Redwald would betray him ; "if he is minded to do so," he went on, "I would sooner die than wander about any more." The friend then left him, and Edwin sat in front of King Redwald's palace till it grew dark, thinking how unhappy he was. Suddenly he became aware that a stranger was standing by him ; and looking up he saw a man in a strange dress, whose face he did not know.

"Why sit you here ?" said the stranger.

EDWIN. "It matters little where I sit."

STRANGER. "I know your name, and the cause of your trouble. What will you give me if I turn King Redwald's heart to befriend you ?"

EDWIN. "All that I have."

STRANGER. "And what, if I give you victory in battle, and the kingdom that is yours of right?"

EDWIN. "I will give you myself. But who are you?"

STRANGER. "That cannot yet be known. But remember your promise, when you next feel this sign."

And the stranger put his hand upon Edwin's head, and so vanished out of his sight.

Almost at the same moment Edwin's friend came out of the palace, and told him that King Redwald had changed his mind, and was now resolved not to give up his guest, even if by so doing he should bring war upon his kingdom.

And indeed war did follow. The usurper was defeated, and Edwin came into his father's kingdom of Deira.

Nine years afterwards, King Edwin sent envoys to Eadbald, son of Ethelbert of Kent, asking for his sister Ethelburga to wife. At first Eadbald would not consent, for Edwin was yet a Pagan. Afterwards, remembering, it may be, how his own mother, Bertha, had helped to bring Ethelbert his father to the faith, he let her go. Only he took Edwin's promise that she should be suffered to worship God according to her conscience, and he sent a certain Paulinus

with her. This Paulinus had been sent by Gregory some twenty years before to help Augustine.

The next year Edwin was nearly slain by a murderer, sent by the King of Wessex. The man struck at the King with a poisoned dagger, but a faithful servant that was standing by threw himself between, was pierced by the dagger, and so died in his master's stead. So the King escaped, but he well-nigh lost his wife that same day—it was Easter Day in the year 626—so frightened was she by what had happened to her husband. However, both she and her baby lived. When the King began to thank his gods for this mercy, thinking that it was of their giving, Paulinus told him that it was not so, but of the mercy of the Saviour Christ, to whom he had prayed, he said, for the Queen's life. "Let me punish this wicked King of Wessex," said Edwin, "and I will myself follow Christ." And to show that he meant what he said, he suffered Paulinus to baptize the child. She was christened the next Whitsunday, by the name of Eanfled.

The King of Wessex was punished for his wickedness; but Edwin still delayed to declare himself a Christian. At last Paulinus came to him, and laying his hand upon his head, as the stranger had done ten years before, asked him whether he remembered the sign, and bade him, seeing that he had received all

according to his desire, fulfil his promise. After this Edwin lingered no more; only he would call a council of his chiefs, and lay the thing before them, so that, if it might be, all the nation might turn to the true God and to His Christ, together with their King. So the priests and nobles met in council.

First there rose in the assembly one Coifi, who was the chief of the priests, and spake in this fashion: "The gods to whom we give our prayers and our sacrifices give us, it seems to me, nothing in return. No one of all the people has been more diligent in worship than I, yet many have been more happy and more prosperous. If this new doctrine promises us more, I say that we should follow it."

After him rose another, an ancient chief, and said: "The soul of man, O King, seems to me like unto a bird that flies into some room where you and your lords are sitting at supper. Out of the darkness it flies, and for a brief space sees the light and feels the warmth, then it passes into the darkness again and is seen no more. So it is with the soul. It comes out of the dark, we know not whence; for a few years it tarries among the things we know; then it goes again into the dark, we know not whither. If the new doctrine gives us light about the things unseen, I will leave all to follow it."

At last the King said, "Who will profane the temples of the gods?"

Coifi the priest answered, "None is fitter for this task than I, who have served them these many years."

Then he mounted a horse, and took a spear in his



SAXON KING AND HIS RETINUE.

hand—both things unlawful for a priest—and tilting at the idol of the chief temple overthrew it.

On Easter Day in the year following King Edwin was baptized, and multitudes of the people followed him, till it seemed as if all Deira and the rest of the North country was turned to Christ.

But there was trouble to come. Penda, King of Mercia, who was a heathen, leagued himself with a British king, and these two meeting Edwin in battle, overthrew him and slew him. Then all the land seemed to turn away from the faith of Christ and to become heathen again. As for Paulinus, he fled to Kent by sea, taking with him Queen Ethelburga and her children.

But the light was not put out for long. Only when it began to shine again, it came from another place. The year after Edwin's death, Oswald, son of that same usurper whom Redwald and Edwin had overcome and slain, came back to his father's kingdom. He had been an exile in Scotland for these seventeen years, and had there learnt to follow the Christian faith. He sent therefore for some one who should teach his people. First came a certain Cormac, but he was a man of a harsh temper, and could do nothing. Going back to those that sent him, he said, "These English are so stubborn and barbarous that it is useless to teach them." "Nay," said one of those that heard him, Aidan by name, "you did not follow the Apostles' command, and feed the babes with milk, but would give them strong meat, which they could not bear." Aidan, therefore, was sent in his place, and with the help of King Oswald brought again all the North country to

the faith of Christ. So, after some sixty years, Gregory's hopes for the "Angels" of Deira were accomplished.

CHAPTER XI.

KING ALFRED.

WE have heard in the last two chapters of several kingdoms, Kent, for instance, Deira, East Anglia, Mercia, Wessex. There were others which I need not name, two or even three more, so that this time, roughly the two hundred and fifty years between 577 and 827, has been called the "Time of the Seven Kingdoms," or the "Time of the Eight Kingdoms." But there never were eight or even seven kingdoms at once. One rose and another fell. But in 823 Egbert, King of Wessex, made himself over-lord over all the kingdoms of England; we may say, in fact, that he was King of England. He died in 836, but before the end of his reign the Danes, people from Denmark Norway, and Sweden, began to come into England, and to fight against the English, just as the English had come and fought against the Britons. King Alfred, whose story I have now to tell you, was a great defender of England against the Danes.

Alfred was the youngest of the four sons of King Ethelwulf, the son of Egbert. Of all the sons he was the most fair to look at, and the most gracious in speech and act, and the most obedient to his elders. He was strong of body, though troubled to the end of his life with frequent sickness, and skilful in the use of arms, and in hunting. It happened by some chance that he was never taught to read. Teachers were few in those days, and the times were full of trouble ; yet he would listen to the minstrels and others when they sang or repeated poems, and this with so much attention that though he had read nothing he could remember much. At last he learnt to read, and in this way. When he was about thirteen years old his mother¹ showed to him and his brothers a book of poetry which she had in her hand and said, "I will give this book to him who shall most quickly learn it." These words greatly moved him, especially as he was much delighted by the beauty of the first letter, which was finely painted in colours and gold. "Will you really give this book," he said to his mother, "to him who will soonest understand it and repeat it to you?" She was glad to hear him speak in this way, for before she thought that he did not care to learn. "Yes," she said, "I will give it." So the young

¹ Not his own mother, but Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald of France, Ethelwulf's second wife.

Alfred took the book, and did actually learn to read it, and to repeat it. The man who tells this story was a Welshman, Asser by name, who had been brought up in the school which was kept by the



DANISH WARRIORS.

monks of St. David's. He was a friend of Alfred's, and wrote, for the most part, of his own knowledge. Among other things, he tells us how Alfred used to lament that when he was young and had both time and ability to learn, he could find no teachers, and

that afterwards he was so much troubled by frequent sickness, and by the cares of his kingdom, and by continual attacks from the heathen, that is to say the Danes, that he could find no leisure. Nevertheless it is true that he both read and wrote more than any of the kings that were before him or that came after him.

The Danes gave the English folk but little peace in those days. When Alfred was twenty years old—it was the very year in which he married his wife Alcswith, a noble lady of East Anglia—they came to Nottingham, which was one of the chief towns of Mercia, and took it, whereupon the King of Mercia sent to King Ethelred praying for help. This the King willingly gave, marching thither with a great army of West Saxons, and Alfred, who was his brother, went with him. The Danes would not come forth from the town to fight, nor were the English able to break down the wall. So peace was made, and the two brothers returned to their own country.

A year or so afterwards there was a great slaughter of the English in the East country. Edmund, who was King of those parts under Ethelred, fought against the Danes, and was defeated, and many of his people were slain. When the day was lost, the King, having escaped from the field, hid himself under a bridge. But one passing by espied him, for his spurs, which were of gold, shone in the moonlight; so he was taken to the

camp of the Danes. And the chiefs of the heathen would have given him his life and kingdom if he would deny his Lord Christ. The King, refusing, was first scourged, and then set up as a mark for the archers to shoot at, and so died. The place where he suffered for his faith is called St. Edmundsbury to this day, and his name is remembered on the 20th day of



THE MARTYRDOM OF KING EDMUND.

November in every year. These things happened when Alfred was twenty-two years of age.

In the year following the heathen came into the West country and took the town of Reading, from which one part of their army went forth to plunder the land, while another built for defence a great rampart between the Thames and the Kennet, for the Kennet flows through Reading town. Three times

within the space of ten days did the Englishmen and the Danes fight together. The first battle was at Englefield;¹ there a certain Ethelwulf, who was Alderman of Berkshire, led the Englishmen and won a great victory, slaying one of the Danish earls and the greater part of their army. Four days afterwards the second battle was fought hard by Reading town; the King was there, and Alfred, and the Alderman. First the English had the better, slaying such of the heathen as they found outside the walls; but when those that were within sallied forth, then the English fled, and many were slain, and among them the Alderman. And again, after four days, there was yet a third battle. The Danes had made for themselves a camp on the top of a hill that was named Ashdown, or the Hill of the Ash.² By this time many of their countrymen from other parts had joined them, so that now they had a very great army, with two kings and many earls to lead them. The kings were with one part of the army, and the earls with the other. On the other hand, the English also divided their army into two parts; one of these was led by King

¹ Near the borders of Berkshire and Surrey, about twenty miles from Reading.

² Near Lambourn, and between twenty and thirty miles west of Reading. The names of several places in the neighbourhood recall the event, as Ashbury, Ashdown Park, Alfred's Castle, Dragon Hill.

Ethelred and the other by Alfred. The English were on the lower ground, and marched up the hill to attack the Danes, Alfred leading the way, for the King tarried long in his tent till the priest had finished saying mass. Then the Danes came out of their camp to meet them, and there was a fierce battle, more especially round a certain stunted thorn, which Asser, who tells the story, says he had seen with his own eyes. At last the Englishmen won the day; one of the kings was slain, and five earls, and all the hill was covered with dead bodies. As for them that were left, they fled to their stronghold at Reading, the English pursuing them and slaying them on the way till it was dark. Nevertheless the Danes gathered together another army within fourteen days after this battle of Ashdown, and fought with Ethelred and Alfred near to Basing,¹ and won a victory over them. After Easter in this year Ethelred died, and Alfred became king in his stead, being then twenty-three years of age. Nor had he been king for more than a month when he had to fight with his enemies again. This time also he was beaten. Nor was this the end. Ten battles in all did he fight—so say the chroniclers—in this first year of his reign.

After this the land had rest for a while. For Alfred, seeing that he could not stand against the

¹ In Hampshire, about twelve miles south from Reading.

Danes, and that his people were worn out by war and other troubles, made peace with his enemies. They made an agreement with him that they would not come again into his kingdom. Doubtless he persuaded them so far by giving them money. However this may be, there was peace in the land for four years. Then the troubles began again, and increased year by year till, when Alfred was twenty-nine years old, they came to their height. The Danes sailed up the Severn with a fleet carrying a great army of men, till they came to the town of Gloucester. There they landed, and marching across Gloucestershire and Wiltshire came to Chippenham. So strong were they, that the King could not even gather an army to meet them. Some of the English fled over the sea to France; most of them submitted themselves to the invaders. Only Alfred himself was left with a few of his nobles. With these he fled far into the West country, to a place between the two rivers Parret and Tone.¹ It was an island in those days, and men called it the "Isle of the Nobles,"² because Alfred's companions, though they were of noble birth, worked with spade and pickaxe to fortify the place.

¹ In Somersetshire, about seven miles from Taunton.

² Athelinga Eigge, now shortened into Athelney. Atheling we have in the title "Edgar the Atheling." Eigge is first found in the word "eyot," the name given to an island in the Thames and other rivers.

There he abode with his few faithful followers for a year.

The island itself did not furnish food sufficient for the King and his company, so that they were constrained to seek it from the country round about. On one of his journeys, Alfred took shelter in the house of a certain cowherd. The cowherd's wife was baking cakes on the fire, while the King sat by the hearth mending his bows and arrows. While she was busy about other matters, the cakes began to burn, the King taking no heed of them. Then the woman turned and rebuked him—

“Ca'sn thee mind the ke-aks, mon, an' doossen zee 'em burn?

I'm boun thee 's eat 'em vast enough, az zoon az tiz tha turn.”¹

At the year's end, Alfred felt that the time was come to make a struggle for freedom. The men of three shires, Wiltshire, Somersetshire, and Hampshire, met together at a place called Egbert's Stone.²

Two days afterwards a great battle was fought, and the Danes were beaten. Many were slain on the field; the rest fled into a fort which they had made. Then Alfred besieged them, keeping them so close that at the end of fourteen days they asked

¹ Asser gives the words in Latin; Dr. Giles translates them then into the Somersetshire dialect.

² Probably in Wiltshire.

for peace. The conditions of peace were these—
“Guthrum, the leader of the Danes, was to become a Christian, and his chief nobles with him. The Danes were to depart from Alfred’s dominion, but they were to have a large region in East Anglia for their own. For the time to come, the two nations were to live together as friends, and to be governed by equal laws.” These conditions were fulfilled. King Guthrum and thirty men, who were the chief nobles of the army, were baptized. For the King, Alfred himself stood god-father, calling him Athelstan. Then there was a time of peace. Eight years afterwards there was another war, and Guthrum made a treaty by which he gave up London.

What King Alfred did for his people during this quiet time it would take long to tell; nor indeed do we know all for certain. He made good that which the Danes had destroyed. He caused the roads to be restored, and the bridges that had been broken down to be built again. Towns and cities that had been wasted by war he repaired, and caused the fields to be cultivated again. The laws that the kings before him had made, he considered with care, keeping such as seemed to him to be wise, and rejecting such as were not good. He built or restored many churches, and put clergy into them that they might teach the people. And because there were no learned men

in his own kingdom, he brought such from other countries. Not a few books did he write with his own hand, for all the cares of his kingdom could not hinder him from study. Nor did he forget to provide, so far as it was possible, for the better defence of the kingdom. He took care that when the people were called together to fight against an enemy, they should do so quickly and in good order ; and he built better and swifter ships of war than had ever been known in England before.

For the last eight years of his reign, the King had to fight many battles both by land and sea with his old enemies. But he had done so much in making both his soldiers and his ships better, that not once did he fail to overcome his enemies. And the kings that came after him, Edward the Elder, who was his son, and Athelstan his grandson, continued with even more success to drive back the Danish invaders. Alfred died "six nights before All-Hallow Mass," that was on October 26, in the year 901 (All-Hallow Mass is All Saints' Day), worn out with toil and sickness. All his life he had suffered grievously in his body. He was but fifty-two years of age.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW KING ATHELSTAN FOUGHT AT BRUNANBURGH.

EDWARD, surnamed the Elder, came after Alfred his father, and was—so men said—as good a leader in war and ruler in peace; and after Edward came Athelstan his son. To him his grandfather Alfred had showed special favour, giving him a purple cloak, and a belt adorned with jewels, and a sword in a scabbard of gold. And when he grew to be a man, and was crowned king—this was done when he was thirty years old—he showed himself a very wise ruler. None of the kings before him had been so great, for all the land, both English and Welsh, acknowledged him to be their over-lord.

But in the thirteenth year of his reign, the Danes, the Scots, and the Britons made a great league against him. Their leaders were Constantine, King of Scots, Anlaf the Dane, whose father had been King in Northumbria, Olaf, also a Dane, King of Dublin—for the Danes held Dublin in those days, and

for many years afterwards—the King of Cumberland, and not a few English who were discontented with their master. All these gathered a vast host in the north, and thither King Athelstan marched to meet them.

While the armies lay encamped over against each other, Anlaf the Northumbrian, seeking to know what Athelstan proposed to do, disguised himself as a minstrel, and so made his way into the tent of the King. There he played and sang, while Athelstan and his nobles sat at their meal, and while he seemed to be resting from his playing and singing, he listened to their talk. The meal ended, the King gave him a silver piece. This he buried in the earth, disdaining to keep that which had been



A MINSTREL.

given him as hire for service. But one who had been a soldier under him in former times, saw the Prince while he was burying the money, and knew him again. The man kept silence till Anlaf had gone back to his own camp, then he told the English

King what he had seen. "Why did you delay?" said the King. "Had you been quicker, we had caught him." The man made answer, "Sire, the same oath that I have sworn to you, I swore once to Anlaf. If I had betrayed him, you might have looked for me to betray you. But now, if you will listen to my advice, change the place of your tent." The King changed it, and it was well that he did so, for the camp was attacked that night, and a certain bishop, who, being newly come thither, pitched his tent in the place where the King's had been, was slain.

For two days more King Athelstan waited till the help that he looked for had come up. Then he gave battle to the enemy. Never, since the coming of the English into Britain, had there been a fiercer fight than was fought that day. The men of Mercia and the men of the West Saxons stood side by side, and turned the enemy to flight. Five kings of the Northmen and seven earls fell that day, and Constantine fled back to his own country, and the Danes from Dublin, such as the sword had spared, crossed the sea again.

"Full many a stalwart warrior lay
Upon the field of death that day,
By swarthy kite devoured, and torn
By raven with its beak of horn,

And lordly eagle, plumaged white,
And hawk that follows still the fight,
And the grey wolf, whom evening brings
From forest depths to feed on kings."

After this King Athelstan increased still more in honour and power. He ruled his people also with much prudence, making many wise laws. He caused justice to be done without fear between men, and made provision for the poor.

In the year 941 he died, being then forty-six years of age, and was buried in the Abbey of Malmesbury, to which abbey, as to the town of Malmesbury, he had given great gifts. To this day, the "commoners" of this place enjoy certain lands which the King bestowed upon the townsmen for services that they rendered him in his wars.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STORY OF KING CANUTE.

NEARLY forty years after the death of the brave Athelstan, the kingdom of England came to a boy whose name was Ethelred. He was but ten years old when he became king, and during all his reign he

and his people were in great trouble. So ill did he rule that men called him the "Unready."¹ Every year the Danes grew more and more powerful. Sometimes the King tried to drive them out of England by force of arms, but he was often defeated. Sometimes he bribed them by large sums of money to go away. They took the money and went away, but very soon came back again. At last he tried what was the very worst and most wicked way of all. He sent secretly to the rulers and magistrates throughout the kingdom that on a certain day—it was the 13th day of November in the year 1002—"all the Danish men in England should be slain." These Danish men were living in peace among the English; many of them had married English wives. On the morning of this day this evil deed was done; all indeed were not killed, but many thousands were, and women also, and among these the sister of King Sweyn of Denmark. The last thing that this lady said was this: "*My death will bring many wars upon England.*" And so indeed it came to pass.

Year after year the Danes came and ravaged the land. Sometimes King Sweyn came with them,

¹ *Unready* does not mean what the word would mean now—not ready to do what he had to do at the right time—but without counsel or purpose; that is, often changing his mind, and not keeping one thing steadily before him.

sometimes he sent other chiefs. At last, eleven years after the death of his sister, he came with a fleet greater and more splendid than had ever been seen before. The beaks of the ships were of brass, and under the beaks were figure-heads, finely carved and painted, of men and bulls and dolphins. On the mast-heads were figures of birds and dragons to serve for weathercocks, and the sterns were adorned with golden lions. The King brought with him his son Canute, of whom I am to tell in this story.¹

For six months or more King Sweyn went through the land with his army, doing such damage as no army had ever done before. The English could not stand up against him; as for King Ethelred, he fled over the sea to France. Sweyn indeed was King of England, but the crown was never put upon his head, for on Candlemas Day he died suddenly. Of the manner of his death the men of the time told this story. I have spoken before of a certain town in the East country which was called St. Edmundsbury,² after King Edmund. There had been built in the town a house for monks, in honour of the King. Sweyn sent messengers to say that he would burn both the town and the monks' house with fire, and

¹ His name is properly spelt *Cnut*. The Pope, it is said, could not pronounce this word, and changed it into Canutus.

² For the story of St. Edmund, see pp. 85, 86.

slay all their inhabitants, unless he should receive a great ransom for their lives. And when the people of the town sent to the King at Gainsborough, in the county of Lincoln, praying that he would not ask so great a sum of money, for that they were not able to pay it, he said the same things again with greater violence. When he had spoken, it seemed to him that King Edmund suddenly appeared in the midst of the council, no man seeing him except himself, and that he thrust him through with a spear of gold that he carried in his hand. Men said also that before he died he sent for his son Canute, and bade him rule England prudently and justly.

The Danes chose Canute to be King, but the English were not content that a foreigner should reign over them, and sending to Ethelred, where he was in France, prayed him to come back. So Ethelred returned, and marching into the East country where Canute still was, compelled him to take to his ships and sail away. The next year he came back with more ships and men than before, and there was war again till Ethelred died. Thereupon Canute was crowned King by command of an assembly that met at Southampton, but Ethelred's son, Edmund, who was called Ironside by reason of his valour, was also crowned in London.

Canute sailed up the Thames, having a fleet of more than three hundred ships. When he came to London he found that he could not pass the bridge,¹ so strongly was it held against him. Thereupon he caused a canal to be dug on the south side of the river, and by this took some of his ships to the other side of the bridge. But when he tried to take the town, the citizens beat him back from the walls, killing many of his men.

After this the two Kings met in battle at Sherston.² Edmund put his best and bravest warriors in the front line, and he himself took his place in front of all, for none was better or braver than he. All day long the two armies fought, neither winning the victory. That night they rested on the field of battle, and on the morrow, when the day dawned, they fought again. And now the English began to drive back their enemies, when there went through the army the report that King Edmund had been slain. It was a traitor that set the report about. When King Edmund heard it, he mounted to the top of a hill, and taking off his helmet, showed himself to the people, that they might see that he was yet alive. It is said also that seeing the traitor who had first

¹ There was then but one bridge over the river. Probably it stood at the same place where London Bridge now is.

² In Wiltshire, near Malmesbury.

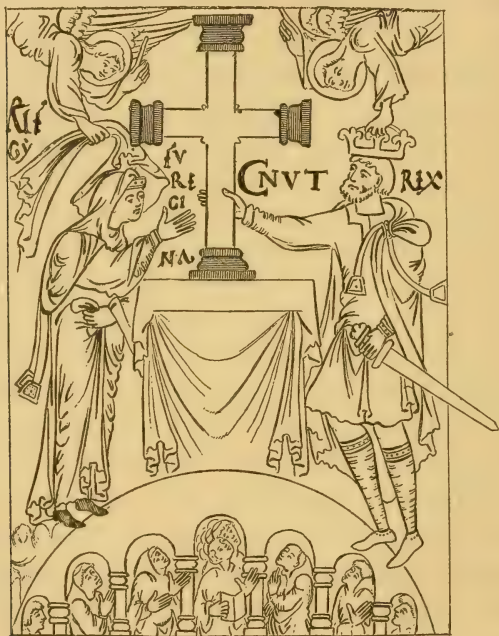
told the false news, he threw his spear at him. He indeed warded it off with his shield, but it pierced the man that stood by his side, and wounded two others also, so great was the strength of the Ironside.

Seven times in that year did Edmund fight with Canute, and the last and fiercest fight of all was at Assandun. Canute made as if he would get to his ships, and Edmund seeing this charged him sword in hand at the head of his men. And now again the English might have won the day, but that a traitor, the very same that had spread the false report of the King's death, fled from the battle with his followers. So their line was broken; nevertheless they still held out, even till the end of the day, and till far into the night. Then at last Edmund the Ironside was constrained to leave the field. That day the flower of the English race perished.

Even so King Edmund did not lose heart. He gathered together another army, and would have fought again, but that all the land was weary of the war. So these two, Canute and Edmund, met on an island in the Severn, and agreed to divide the kingdom between them; Edmund was to rule the South, Canute the North. But before the year was out King Edmund died, some said of poison, and the whole kingdom came to Canute, for it had been

agreed that whoever of the two should live the longer, should have the whole.

And now Canute the Dane set himself with all



KING CANUTE AND HIS QUEEN.

his heart to become a true English king. The traitor that had played King Edmund false was rightly punished for his wrong-doing. It is said that he even boasted to the King that he had not only

deserted Edmund in the hour of need, but had also slain him. Thereupon the King cried out, "*Therefore you shall die, for you are guilty of treason both to God and to me.*" And the traitor was slain. When Canute was crowned King, he swore that he would do justice between man and man, and that he would himself be obedient to the laws. And this he did. So, when in a fit of rage he slew with his own hand one of the "house-carles,"¹ he declared that he would pay the fine that was set on the shedding of blood. In those days when a man was slain, the slayer paid a fine according to the rank of the man. So the King said to the house-carles, "Say what fine I must pay for the killing of your comrade." And when they, fearing to judge the King, would not say, he fixed the fine for himself, making it nine times greater than what it should have been of right. And what the King did for himself, that he commanded all that were in authority under him to do for others. The poor were to be protected against the wrong-doing of the rich; all men were to be judged justly but with mercy; above all, Englishmen and Danes were to live at peace with each other, forgetting all grudges and injuries.

And as he did his duty to man, so he did it also to

¹ The "house-carles" were the King's body-guard. For more about them, see p. 116.

God, judging that it was from Him that he had his kingdom ; this he showed in the manner that I will now tell. On a certain day, when he was at the very height of his power, he commanded that they should set his royal chair on the sea-shore. On this he sat, his courtiers standing about him. Then he spoke to the tide as it flowed, "Thou art my subject, and this land on which I have set my chair is mine ; never hath there been any one that refused to obey my bidding, and having so refused, escaped without punishment. I command thee therefore that thou come no further on to my land, and that thou presume not to wet the garments and limbs of thy lord." And when the tide, rising after its wont, came up and had no respect to the King's command, but wetted his feet and his legs, then the King, leaping from his seat, cried aloud, "Let all men know henceforth that the power of kings is an empty and foolish thing, and that no one is in very truth worthy to bear this name of King, saving Him only whose bidding the earth and the sea and all that in them is obey according to everlasting laws." After that day Canute would never again put his crown upon his head, but put it on the image of the crucified Christ.

The King greatly honoured the clergy, and gave great gifts to churches and abbeys. At Assandun, where he vanquished King Edmund, he caused a

church to be built, that was notable for being built of stone, for in those days they were mostly built of wood. On the church of St. Edmund and on many others he and his Queen Emma bestowed much wealth. Among these was the great Church or Cathedral of Ely. They say that one day as he was passing in his boat by this church he made these verses that follow—

“The Ely monks sang clear and high,
As King Canute was passing by ;
‘Row near the doors and hear them sing,’
Cried to his knights Canute the King.”

Minstrels he loved greatly, and rewarded with generous gifts, as will be seen from this story. Among those who came to his Court was a certain man from Iceland, where in those days poetry and learning greatly flourished. When the King came into the hall he said, “I see one here who is not of this country ; he has the look of a poet, yes, and of a fighter too, for I would sooner have him as my comrade in battle than any other man here.” When the minstrel from Iceland heard these words he sang these verses—

“To Cnut the Dane I tune my lay ;
English and Irish own his sway,
And many an island in the sea ;
So let us sing his praise that he
Be known of men in every land
To where heaven’s lofty pillars stand.”

This done he said to the King, "Suffer me to speak a poem that I have made in your honour." "You shall," said the King, "at our next meeting." So the next day there was a great gathering. When the poet from Iceland repeated his poem, the King highly praised it, then he took off from his head a Russian cap that he wore; it was broidered with gold, and had golden knots to it. "Fill this with silver," said he to his Chamberlain, "and give it to the poet." This the Chamberlain would have done, but because there was a great crowd of men, he had to reach it over their shoulders. So the silver was turned out of the cap on to the floor. But when the poet stooped to pick it up, the King said, "Let it be; the poor will be the better for it, and thou shalt not lose."

King Canute died when he was but little more than forty years old. His subjects greatly lamented him, for never was a king who better kept his oath to deal truly with his people. After him came his two sons, Harold and Hardicanute, both of them men of little worth; after them Edward, who was called the Confessor; he was son of Ethelred.

CHAPTER XIV.

HAROLD THE EARL.

GODWIN, son of Wulfnoth, was a great man in the days of King Canute and of King Edward. Six sons he had, and a daughter that was married to King Edward, and of these sons the second in age was Harold. This Harold was made Earl of East Anglia when he was twenty-four years of age; his brothers also had Earldoms, so that Godwin and his sons between them ruled three fourth-parts of the realm of England. But after six years they fell under the displeasure of King Edward, for they were against the Normans, for whom the King had a great favour. As for Harold, he fled to Ireland with his brother Leofwine. Thence he came in the year after with a fleet, and landing at Porlock, which is in the county of Somerset, fought and won a battle with the people of the country. Thirty thanes, for so they called knights in those days, were slain, and a multitude of common men. Thence Harold, with whom went Leofwine, sailed to the Isle of Wight, where he

found Earl Godwin, his father. Thence the three sailed eastward to Kent, and from Kent up the Thames to London. They lay with their ships on the south side of the river, and on the north side were King Edward's men. Earl Godwin sent an embassy to ask that he and his sons should be suffered to return. For a while the King said No, the Normans about him so advising, but when it was manifest that the people would have the Earl and his sons come back, he yielded, and the Normans fled for their lives.

Thus Harold got his Earldom again, and in the year after, his father dying suddenly, the Earldom of Wessex. So he grew in power and in favour with the King and people. A great warrior he was, and tall and strong, a comely person, and of gentle manners.

But, after a while, he had an unlucky adventure which brought him in the end great trouble. He took sail with certain companions, being minded, it would seem—for he had his dogs and hawks with him—to have some sport in hunting. When he had been a short time at sea—it was from some port in the English Channel that he had sailed—a storm began to blow, and cast his ship on the coast of France, near to the castle of a certain Count Guy. One of the fishermen of the place chanced to know him. This man went to the Count Guy, and said to him,

"Give me twenty pounds, and I will show you a prisoner who will pay you willingly twenty pounds for his ransom." Thereupon the Count rode with all haste to the coast, and caused Harold and his companions to be seized and carried to a castle that he had some miles distant from the sea. But one of the men that waited on Harold escaped, and flying to William, Duke of Normandy, told him the whole matter, which William, for certain reasons of his own, was right glad to hear.

William, as will be seen from what is said of him in another place, was set on winning the kingdom of England for himself, and he thought it a most fortunate thing that chance should have put the Earl Harold within his reach, for there was not a man more likely to be chosen King than he. He sent, therefore, with all haste to the Count, commanding him to bring the English prisoner that he had taken. This the Count, who was not a little afraid of Duke William, did without delay, and receiving as much as he had hoped to get by way of ransom, was well content. As for Harold, it was a bad exchange for him, for, as will be seen, he was likely to pay more for his liberty than he would have paid to Count Guy. The Duke indeed showed much hospitality to him, taking him as his companion when he went a-hunting, and on an expedition that he made about

this time against the people of Brittany. There was no better entertainment that one man could give to another in those days than to give him a part in some fighting. But when Harold was wishful to go home, then Duke William showed what was in his mind. "I shall not let you go," he said, "till you have sworn to be my man, to help me to the best of your power so long as King Edward shall live, and to acknowledge me as King of England when King Edward shall die." This and other things Harold promised, not seeing in what other way he could get his liberty, and judging doubtless that a promise made under compulsion does not bind him that makes it. But the Duke, not forgetting that Harold might so excuse himself, required that he should confirm his promise by an oath. This Harold did not refuse to do. He laid his hand upon a book of the Gospels that had been set on what seemed to be a table, and swore that he would abide faithfully by his word. But when he had so sworn, the Duke uncovered that on which the book had lain, and lo! it was a chest full of the bones of saints and such-like things. Then Harold, it is said, turned pale and trembled, seeing what he had done without knowing.¹

¹ "Whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?" (St. Matt. xxiii. 17). It was the Gospel that made the saints what they were. So we judge, but the men of those times thought differently about such matters.

Not many months after this Harold had another great trouble, this time with one of his own house. Tostig, the brother that was next to him in age, had for some ten years or more been Earl of Northumbria. But he had abused his authority both foolishly and harshly. Had he been the wisest of men, his task had not been easy, for he was an Englishman, and his people, for the most part, Danes. But he was hasty and violent, and would have his own will, whether it was just or not. Often too he would leave his Earldom to live at Court, where King Edward held him in great favour. At last, in the year 1065, Tostig having caused two nobles of Northumbria to be put to death, the people rebelled against him and drove him out. At first the King, who loved him well, was minded to bring him back, even by force. But Harold, having conferred with the leaders of the insurrection, and heard the accusations that were brought against Tostig, judged otherwise. So his Earldom was taken from Tostig, and he himself banished.

And now Edward, whom men called the Confessor for his piety and goodness, was like to die. He had caused to be built a great church at Westminster, spending on it, so men said, a tenth part of the whole wealth of the kingdom. This having been finished, was consecrated on Innocents' Day (Dec. 28, 1065).

The King was hindered from being present by his weakness, but he was well content to die when he knew



KING EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

that the work was done. Eight days afterwards he was very near to his end. There were in the chamber

with him his wife, the Queen, Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Keeper of the palace, and Harold. The Archbishop asked him, "To whom do you leave your kingdom of England?" Then the King stretched out his hand to Harold, and said, "I commend her" (meaning the Queen) "and the whole nation to thy protection." Having said so much, and received the Holy Communion, he passed away.

The next day King Edward was buried in his new church (where his bones remain to this day), and Harold was crowned King of England in this same place. When the Archbishop (not Stigand, as it should be noted, but Ealdred of York) put the crown upon his head, he asked of the people assembled, "Do you choose Earl Harold, son of Godwin, for your King?" All answered with a great shout, "We choose him." Thereupon the Archbishop duly anointed him, put the crown upon his head, and the sword in his hand, he having first sworn that he would observe the laws of the kingdom. So Harold, son of Godwin, was made King, and had the honour for "forty weeks and one day" (Jan. 6—Oct. 14).

CHAPTER XV.

HAROLD THE KING.

NOT many days had passed after Harold was thus chosen and crowned King of England, when ambassadors came from William of Normandy, demanding of him that he should fulfil the promises that he had made and confirmed with an oath. To them Harold answered, "The kingdom is not mine to give up; I hold it from the people of England." William had not looked for any other answer, and began without any delay to prepare for taking the kingdom by force. He gathered a vast host together, as is told elsewhere, and Harold, on his part, prepared to resist him with all his might.

While the King thus waited for the coming of the Normans, there reached him tidings of a great danger that was threatening him and his kingdom in the north. Earl Tostig had made alliance with Harold Hardrada, King of Norway, and these two had landed in Yorkshire, and were about to march southward, ravaging the country as they went, unless they should be hindered. So Harold set forth with-



SAXON KING AND HIS ARMOUR-BEARER.

out delay, taking his house-carles with him, and gathering as he went such as were willing to go with him. These house-carles, I should say, were the King's own guard. His other soldiers were called together when they were wanted, and went back to their homes and their work when the need was past, but the carles were with the King always. There were some three thousand in all. By the time that Harold, whom I must now call the English Harold, had reached Yorkshire, Harold of Norway and Tostig had vanquished an army that the earls of the north led against them, and after taking York had pitched their camp at Stamford Bridge, which is by the river Derwent. Harold rode through York, where the people received him gladly, and went on to attack the enemy. On his way, it is said, he and his companions met Harold of Norway and Earl Tostig. Said Tostig to his brother, "What will you give me if I consent to make peace?" "Your Earldom," said Harold, "and more besides, if you want it." "And what will you give to my ally, Harold of Norway?" "Seven feet of English ground for a grave, or, for he chances to be very tall, perchance a foot more." Tostig turned away, for he was ashamed to make terms for himself only. It is said also that Harold of Norway, who had stood apart while the two talked together, not knowing who it was that was speaking with Tostig,

was angry when he heard that it was the English King. "Why did you let him depart unhurt?" said he to the Earl.

In the end Harold of England fell upon the enemy before they expected him. They had pitched their camp on both sides of the Derwent, the Bridge of Stamford joining the two. Earl Tostig's men lay on the side that was nearer to York. These made haste to escape across the bridge, and were greatly helped by a stout champion who held it against all the Englishmen. So valiantly did he fight, though he was one only against many, that they could not drive him from his place, till some one going under the bridge thrust at him with his spear through the timbers, and so slew him. Then at last the Englishmen crossed the bridge. While this was doing, Harold of Norway put his men in array. Very fierce was the fight that followed; but in the end both the King of Norway and Earl Tostig were killed, and with them a certain Irish king who had leagued himself with them, hoping to get plunder from English folk. Nor did many of the army escape, for they were twenty miles and more from their ships, and all the country was raised against them, and had no fear of them now that they were beaten men.

Nevertheless, they whom Harold of Norway had left to guard the ships escaped with their lives. They

had made a strong earthwork round the ships (which may be seen to this day near to Riccall on the river Ouse), and Harold the King judged it best not to attack them, knowing that he could not take the place without great loss of men. So he offered them conditions of peace, namely, that they should depart unharmed, but should first swear that they would never come back to England as enemies, and should also leave certain hostages, as pledges of their good faith. This they did, and so departed, carrying with them the dead body of their king.

CHAPTER XVI.

HAROLD THE KING (*continued*).

WHILE King Harold remained in York, to which city he returned after the battle, that he might rest himself and his army, there came a messenger from the south in hot haste with news that William, Duke of Normandy, had landed in England with a great host of men. This was, as near as can be judged, on the first day of October. Not an hour did the King tarry in York after he heard the news, but journeyed

in haste to London, taking with him such of his house-carles as were still fit for service. And as he journeyed he sent messengers to gather fresh soldiers to his standard. Few, indeed, came from the earldoms of the north, but from the shires of the south there was gathered together to London, as the writers of the time tell us, "an innumerable multitude of Englishmen." With these he marched to meet the army of the Normans, and pitched his camp on a hill that was then called Senlac, but now Battle, in memory of the great fight that was then fought. As for the Normans, they lay at Hastings, which was about six miles distant from Senlac Hill.

But first it should be told what the King's brothers, Gurth and Leofwine, would have had him do, and how he answered them. "Let us go," they said, "and meet Duke William : we have made no promise and taken no oath to him, and can therefore fight with a free conscience. And if we are beaten, then he will have to deal with you, so that all will not be lost by one battle. Also you should lay waste all the country between the sea and London, that the Normans may find nothing wherewith to feed themselves and their horses." But Harold refused their counsel. "I myself will meet William of Normandy," he said ; "and I will not lay waste any fields of Englishmen."

On the fourteenth day of October, about nine

o'clock in the morning, the great battle began. King Harold had made his post on Senlac Hill as strong as he could, with a ditch and a triple palisade. In



SAXON SPEARMAN AND ARCHER.

the middle of the line he and his two brothers with the house-carles took their place round the Royal Standard. These were armed with helmets and coats of mail, and had for weapon the Danish battle-

axe. On either wing were the men who had come in from the southern shires, leaving the plough or the forge to fight for King and country. Some had swords and shields, but many were but ill armed, carrying but pikes and bill-hooks and scythes.

Before the first line of the Normans rode a champion, Taillefer by name, who was both a minstrel and a skilful man-at-arms. As he rode he sang the song of Roland,¹ and threw up his lance in the air and caught it again. He came close to the English lines, and struck down first one champion that came out against him, and then another, but was himself struck down by a third.

The Normans were ranged in three divisions. William with his knights being in the middle of the line, advanced, as being themselves the strongest part of the army, against King Harold and his chosen men. On the left wing were the Bretons and the men of Poitou; on the right the French and others. And in each division there were knights, and heavy-armed foot-soldiers, and archers.

First of all the archers came forward, and shot a volley against the English line. This done, they fell back, not being armed for close combat. After these the foot-soldiers came up to the palisade, and sought to break through it, but in vain. And when these

¹ A great French champion who fought against the Saracens.

could do nothing, the Norman knights themselves charged but could not break the English line, for this fought behind a defence. Man for man, too, the Englishmen were taller and stronger than their enemies.

The first loss that the English suffered was from their own fault. The Bretons, coming against them on the left, turned and fled, and King Harold's men, seeing this, charged from out their defences, and pursued them down the hill. They slew, indeed, many, and, so fierce was their charge, drove back even the Norman knights. And when there went abroad a rumour that Duke William himself had fallen, there were some that thought that the battle was won. But when the Duke, uncovering his head, rode through the ranks, showing that he was yet alive, and the knights recovering themselves, rode forward, and the Bretons took courage again and ceased from flight, then the English suffered in their turn, losing many before they could get back to their defences.

After this Duke William himself, with his brothers Robert and Bishop Odo—a stout fighter for all that he was a bishop—and a great company of his knights, charged against the middle of the English line. Then great deeds of arms were done, for Gurth, thrusting with his spear at the Duke, wounded his horse, and was himself struck to the ground by a blow of the

Duke's iron mace. Leofwine also was slain by a Norman knight. But the Englishmen, though troubled at the loss of these brave champions, still held their ground.

Then the Normans feigned to flee, and the Englishmen left their defences to pursue them. Again, as before, when they had rushed out after the Bretons, they suffered great loss, the enemy falling upon them as they were scattered. And, besides this, the palisade being left without defenders, the Normans were able to get within. Yet even then King Harold and his men stood firm. So close was their array, that though a man was slain, his dead body could not fall to the ground, but was kept up by the living.

So the battle might even then have been won, or at least ended on equal terms for both, but that King Harold himself was slain. The Norman archers, by command of the Duke, shot a flight of arrows into the air, and one of these as it fell wounded the King in the eye. He fell at the foot of the Royal Standard, and there, for the life was still in him, the Norman knights battered him to death with many blows. The men that had come from the shires fled from the field, but the house-carles still fought where they stood, not asking for quarter, till all were slain. That day well-nigh all the nobles of the southern shires

that were able to bear arms fell with their King, and many priests also of high and low degree, for when they came to count up the slain they found not a few tonsured¹ heads among the English. The number of them that fell has never been known. Of the Normans there were slain fifteen thousand, that is, a fourth part of their whole army: of the English, doubtless, many more. The body of the King was buried on the sea-shore. "He guarded the coast while he lived," said Duke William, "let him guard it still, now that he is dead." But afterwards it was taken away and laid in the church of the abbey which he had founded at Waltham in Essex.

CHAPTER XVII

WILLIAM, DUKE OF NORMANDY.

WILLIAM, who was afterwards called the Conqueror, was the son of a certain Robert who was Duke of Normandy. It was said that, having been laid when he was born on the floor of the room, he took firm

¹ *I.e.* shaven. All persons belonging to the various orders of the clergy were required to have a part of their heads shaven.

hold of the straw that covered it—for in those days straw was used for carpet even by rich and noble people. It was thought that this was a sign that when he should grow up he would be a great conqueror, who would keep fast hold of everything on which he might lay his hand.

When the boy was seven years old, his father the Duke called together the nobles of the country, and said to them, "I am resolved to journey to the place where our Lord Christ died and was buried. But because I know that this journey is full of dangers, I would have it settled who should be Duke in my place if I should die." The nobles answered him that it would be far better that he should stay at home, and do his duty in ruling his Duchy. But Duke Robert would not be persuaded. He was steadfastly resolved to go. And that it should be settled before he went who should succeed him all were agreed. Thereupon he brought before the nobles his young son William. "This is my son," he said; "he is but little, but he will grow; he is one of your own race, and he has been brought up among you." The Norman nobles were but ill pleased, for the boy's mother was nothing better than a tanner's daughter. Nevertheless they agreed to do as the Duke wished, for there was no one else whom they could agree to choose. Therefore they took the oaths and did

homage to him. So Duke Robert set out, and died not many months afterwards on his journey.

The nobles, though they had sworn to have the young William for their Duke, were but little disposed to keep their oath. All through Normandy there was confusion and trouble ; every man did as he pleased, making war upon his equals, and oppressing those who were below him. They slew with the sword, or poisoned first one and then another of the men who had charge of the young Duke, and more than once they came very near to killing the lad himself. Again and again did his mother's brother, Walter by name, save him by taking him from his castle, and hiding him in the cottages of the poor.

But now he was growing up and able to take care of himself. So, when a certain Thurstan, by the help of some French soldiers, seized the castle of Falaise, the young William, calling all loyal Normans to his help, attacked him, and had it not been for the coming of night, would have taken the castle by storm. Thurstan, seeing that he could not hold the place, gave it up, and was suffered to depart, on condition that he should never return to Normandy.

When William was about twenty years of age, all the nobles of Normandy made a great conspiracy against him. First they tried either to seize or slay him. It chanced that he was hunting at a certain

castle of his. One night, when he had fallen into his first sleep, his jester burst into his room with his staff in his hand, and awoke him, crying out, "If you do not rise and fly for your life, you will never leave this place a living man." Thereupon the young Duke leapt from his bed, dressed himself in haste, and mounted his horse. All that night he rode for his life. It was moonlight, and so he could see his way. There was a river to be crossed, but he came to it where the tide was low, and so he was able to pass it without danger. The ford by which he crossed was afterwards called "The Duke's Way." At sunrise he came to a certain place named Rye, where there was a church and castle. The lord of the place was one Hubert, a loyal man, who had no part in the conspiracy. Hubert was standing at his gate, and seeing the Duke ride by at full speed, called to him and asked why he rode at such haste. "I am flying for my life," said the Duke. Thereupon he ordered a fresh horse to be brought for him, and bade his three sons ride with him for a guard, not leaving him till they had lodged him safely in his castle at Falaise.

And now Duke William, not having sufficient strength among the loyal men of Normandy to meet the rebels, sought help from his over-lord, Henry, King of the French. King Henry granted his petition, and gathering soldiers from his own people, marched to

help the Duke. It was not long before the two armies, the King and the Duke on the one side, and the rebels on the other, met in battle.

There was a certain lord among the rebels named Ralph. He was a powerful man, having among his



NORMAN SOLDIERS.

followers one hundred and twenty knights, each with a banner of his own. This man had sworn that he would smite the Duke wherever he might find him. But now he began to repent of what he had done. It seemed to him a shameful thing to stand in arms against his rightful lord, and all the more so because

the Duke had never done him any wrong. His knights also urged him to return to the Duke, while divers of those with whom he had conspired exhorted him to keep faith with them, and promised him great reward for so doing. For some time he stood doubtful; only he kept his men apart both from the one army and the other. When William saw what he was doing, he said to King Henry, "Those yonder are the men of Ralph of Tessar; he has no grudge against me; I doubt not but that they will soon be on my side." And so indeed it turned out, for Ralph took the advice of his knights. He bade them stay where they were, but he himself galloped across the field, and riding up to the Duke, struck him with his glove. Thus he performed his oath. Afterwards, when the battle was joined, he charged with his men against the rebels.

Fierce was the fight that day, a battle of knights against knights. Nowhere was it fiercer than where King Henry of France fought at the head of his men. Twice was the King struck down from his horse, and each time the warrior that struck him was himself slain. As for the Duke, he bore himself most bravely, and with better fortune than the King. He slew the most stalwart champion of the rebels with his own hand. As this man rode in the front rank, as if to challenge any that might dare to attack him, William

charged him, using, not his lance, as was constantly the custom, but his sword. With this he smote the champion such a blow between the throat and the chest that the man fell dead from his horse.

Soon the rebels fled on every side. Many were slain in the battle, and many fell in the flight, but yet more perished in a flooded river which they were compelled to cross. The very mill-wheels, it is said, were stopped by the bodies of the dead.

It was on this day that William earned for the first time the name of Conqueror.

After this he sought to win for his wife, Matilda, daughter of Baldwin, Count of Flanders. It has been said that he courted her in a very strange fashion. First, for such is the story, he made his suit in a peaceable way through her father. Her answer was this: "I had sooner be a nun than the wife of a low-born man." When William heard this, he mounted his horse, and taking with him a few companions, rode to Bruges, in which town the lady was then living. He found her coming back from church, and leaping from his horse, seized her by the hair, and beat and kicked her. But when next Count Baldwin inquired of his daughter whether she was willing to take any man for a husband, she made this answer: "No husband will I have, except it be William the Norman."

However this may be, it is certain that the Pope forbade the marriage. There was some kindred between the two,¹ and such were not permitted to marry except by special leave of the Pope. But William took no heed of the Pope's forbidding. Matilda became his wife ; and, after awhile, the Pope granted him pardon.

There is no need to tell again what has been told already in the foregoing chapters ; how William, getting Harold into his possession, made him swear to be his man ; how he gathered together a great host, and coming to England, conquered King Harold in a great battle on the hill of Senlac. It is said that when he was leaping from his boat to the shore, he stumbled and fell. His companions were greatly troubled at this mishap, which seemed to them a bad beginning of the enterprise. He who had so great a thing to accomplish in England should not, they thought, stumble and fall so soon as he touched its shore. But William did not lose heart for a moment. Lifting up his hands, which were full of earth, he cried in a loud voice, "See ! I have taken possession of this land of England."

The story of the battle also has been told ; but this may be said, that as no man had more to win in this same battle, so no man bore himself more bravely.

¹ Strangely enough, it is not known what this kindred was.

Many a warrior did he smite to the ground with the great mace which he was wont to carry ; one of them was a brother of King Harold, one of the bravest and most stalwart warriors on the English side. Nor did he fail either in prudence, or such skill as a general should show. It may be said that, beyond all doubt, Harold and his Englishmen would have won the day at the battle of Senlac, had not William, Duke of Normandy showed himself so excellently good a soldier and leader.

PART III,

*UNDER THE NORMAN KINGS AND THEIR
SUCCESSORS.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

WILLIAM, KING OF ENGLAND.

FOR one-and-twenty years did the Conqueror reign in England. Not a little good did he do in his new kingdom. First of all, so strong and resolute was he, he made all men, however great and powerful they might be, understand that they must obey the laws. He caused equal justice to be administered between man and man. He forbade all buying and selling of slaves. He brought not a few learned men into the country, caused the clergy to do their duty better, and greatly encouraged the building of splendid churches.

Nevertheless the English people suffered many things at his hands. For, first, he was constrained to reward those who had helped him to win the kingdom, nor could he so reward but by spoiling others of goods and lands. Few indeed were the parishes throughout the whole country in which an Englishman was not dispossessed of his estate that

it might be given to some follower of the King.¹ Then the English people again and again rebelled against him, and, being subdued, were, almost of necessity, severely treated. Lastly, he himself became more stern and more cruel, more selfish, more bent on having his own way and following his own pleasure without care or concern for others. Doubtless it was a good thing for England that it should have been conquered, even, one may say, that it should have been conquered by William of Normandy. Nevertheless it was but little of this good thing that came to the Englishmen of that time.

The trouble began with the very day on which Duke William was crowned, to wit the Christmas of the year in which he came to England. Fearing lest the people of London, who were ill-disposed to him, should attack him, he posted round the Abbey of Westminster, in which he was to be crowned, a great body of Norman soldiers. At the very moment when the Archbishop was putting the crown upon the

¹ We know this from a survey which the King caused to be made of the whole country. This still exists, and is known by the name of Domesday Book. Among other things it gives the names of those who owned the land in the time of Edward the Confessor, and of those who then possessed it. Continually we find that an Englishman had been driven out to make room for a Norman. Again and again we find that the value of the land is less than it had been, that much had become "waste."

King's head, asking the English that were in the church whether they were willing to have William, Duke of Normandy, for their king, and the people had answered that they were so willing, there was a great cry outside. The soldiers had fallen upon the houses of the citizens, and had begun to plunder and set them on fire. The English that were in the church fled for their lives, and the Normans made haste to get their share of the spoil. So William was left alone in the church with the bishops and clerks. Still he would not have the matter delayed, and so was crowned. But when he swore that he would rule as justly as had any of the kings that had reigned before him, he added these words, "So that the people be true to me."

Many times did the English people rise against their Norman King. The fiercest of all their rebellions was in Northumberland,¹ and this was most cruelly punished. He laid waste the whole land from north to south, from east to west. Every house was burnt with all that was in it; the stores of corn and hay and other food for man and beast were destroyed; the very animals were driven into the flames

¹ By this word is meant more than the county which now bears the name; it was literally "the land north of the Humber," and included therefore the great county of Yorkshire, with Durham, Cumberland, and Westmoreland.

and burnt. For years to come the fields in many parts lay desolate, and the towns were without inhabitants.

This land of Northumbria he laid waste in his anger ; to another region of England, in the south, he did the same for his pleasure. Of all things, that which William loved the best was hunting, and in order that he might enjoy this sport without hindrance, he cleared in the county of Hampshire a great space of land—thirty miles it was from end to end. Before it had been a flourishing region, fair and fertile, with many houses and churches. Now it was laid waste, given over to the beasts that the King loved to hunt.¹ There seemed to be a curse on the place. Here one of the King's sons, Richard by name, was killed, struck by the bough of a tree, as he was hunting a stag ; here, as will be told in the next chapter, another son, William, who reigned after him, met his death ; here a grandson also perished by the chance blow from the arrow of a companion.

As he grew to be an old man, trouble upon trouble came upon William ; nor had there ever been known, either in England or in Normandy, a darker time than the year in which he died. Grievous storms destroyed the harvest, so that many men died of

¹ This is near the New Forest, one of the most beautiful parts of England, so that here again good has come out of evil.

hunger ; many towns with their churches were burnt, London among them, with its great cathedral of St. Paul's ; many evil deeds were done, and there were many wars. As for William himself, he met his



A NORMAN KING HUNTING.

death in a war that he waged with King Philip of France. They were at variance about a certain district on the border of France and Normandy. The French King had taken possession of it, but King William claimed it as his own. He had been lying

sick at Rouen, the chief town of the Duchy, and had been angered by a foolish jest of King Philip's. Rising from his bed, he rode forth to take vengeance. He wasted all the land that was in dispute between him and the French King, and when he came to the chief town that was in it, he burnt it, churches as well as houses, to the ground. As he rode among the ruins, his horse put its foot on a piece of burning wood and stumbled. The King was thrown forward on the saddle and so grievously hurt, for he was very heavy, that he had to be carried home. There he lay dying for some weeks, and as he lay, he sorely repented him of his many misdeeds, confessing that he had caused the death of many thousands of innocent people, and had taken away their possessions by force from many. Two of his sons were with him—the eldest, Robert by name, had been banished. When he came to speak of who should have his kingdoms after him, he said, "Robert must have Normandy ; it is his of right. As for England, I cannot give away that which is not mine, but my desire is, if it may be, that William, who has ever been faithful to me, may have it." Then said Henry, his youngest son, "And what dost thou give me, my father?" "Five thousand pounds of silver from my hoard," said the King. "But what good shall the silver do me, if I have no place in which to dwell?" The King answered, "Be patient,

my son, and let thy elders go before thee." The King then bade William set out at once for England. Henry also left his father that he might make sure of getting his treasure. After this the King made provision for the building again of the churches which he had caused to be destroyed ; he commanded that the rest of his treasure should be given to the poor, and for the building of churches and the like uses. Certain rebels whom he had cast into prison he ordered to be released. And so, having done what he could to make his peace with God and man, the Conqueror died.

But it was not to be that he should be buried in peace. As the body was being carried to the grave a fire broke out, and seemed likely to destroy a great part of the town. Most of those that followed the coffin left their place in the procession that they might save their possessions. Nor was this all. When the preacher had spoken of all the great deeds of the dead man, he said, "Let all that are here present pray for his soul ; let them beg that God may forgive his trespasses against Him ; let them forgive themselves anything in which he may have trespassed against them."

When he had said these words, a certain knight stood forward and said, "On this very ground whereon ye now stand, once stood my father's house. This

man, whom ye are burying here to-day, took the land away from him by force and against all right, and built this church upon it. I now claim it for my own, and forbid you to bury the body of this robber within the borders of my lawful inheritance."

Thereupon the bishops inquired of them that stood by whether these things were so. When they heard that the man had spoken the truth, they covenanted with him that he should sell to them so much land as was needed for the grave for sixty shillings, and they promised that in due time they would pay him the full price for the whole. Thus was the Conqueror buried.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RED KING.

AS the Conqueror had desired, when he lay dying, that his son William should have England, so it came to pass. Seventeen days after his father's death he was crowned King, having first sworn that he would maintain justice and mercy throughout the realm, and that he would duly preserve all the rights of the Church. He was not indeed permitted to possess

himself of this great inheritance altogether in peace. Some of the great nobles were ill-pleased that William should be King in the place of Robert the eldest son, who was of an easier temper, and might be ruled by them ; it vexed them also that a division should be made between Normandy and England. For these reasons they rebelled against King William, Robert also sending across the sea some soldiers to help them. The King thereupon resorted to the English for help, promising them that their taxes should be lighter, that the laws should be made better, and more justly administered. This help the people willingly gave, so that the rebellion was speedily brought to an end.

But when the Red King—for so they called him from the colour of his hair and his face—felt that he was safe upon his throne, he broke all his promises. Never had England a king more careless of his word, more given to oppression, never one that had less regard either for God or for man. He was especially greedy of money, not caring by what wrong and injustice he got it, and spending it when got in all extravagant and wicked ways. Thus when a bishopric or an abbey became vacant by the death of its possessor, William would not suffer any one to be elected or appointed, but took all the revenue for himself. In this way, when the good Archbishop Lanfranc, who

had crowned him, died, he kept the archbishopric vacant for four years, taking all the revenues for himself. Only when he fell sick, believing that he was about to die, he repented, and gave the office to a certain monk, Anselm by name, who had reproved him for his wickedness, and exhorted him to repent. But when he recovered, he forgot all his good resolutions, and persevered in his evil ways till the very day of his death. The manner of his death was this. He died, as more than one of his house had died before, in the New Forest. He had passed a restless night, so disturbed by bad dreams that he called for his servants to watch by his bedside.

Before the sun rose one of his attendants entered his chamber, and told him of a dream which a certain monk had had, which seemed to mean some evil that was to happen to the King. William laughed. "The man," he said, "dreams like a monk; give him a hundred shillings." Nevertheless, by the advice of his servants, he gave up the intention that he had of hunting, and remained at home. But after dinner he changed his mind, and rode out into the Forest. Before long he was left alone, his companions having gone different ways in the pursuit of game. What happened afterwards was never known for certain. It was commonly reported at the time that one Walter Tyrrell, shooting at a deer, struck a tree with the

arrow, which, glancing off, wounded the King to death ; and that he, seeing what he had done, rode off at full speed to the coast, where he took ship, and sailed to the Holy Land. But Walter Tyrrell, when he came back to England, took a solemn oath that he had not



THE KING'S SHIP.

been that day in that part of the Forest, and had not even seen the King. That he was murdered by some one seems likely, for indeed there were many that had reason to hate him. A peasant, passing through the Forest about sunset, found the King lying dead upon the ground, with an arrow in his breast. The

man put the body into his cart, and carried it to Winchester. There it was buried the next day, in the Cathedral, but without prayer or hymn.

Two good qualities the Red King had, and, as far as we can see, two only. He was faithful and obedient to his father, who regarded him more than his other sons. And he was brave. This story is told of him, that having heard that a certain noble in his dominions abroad had rebelled against him, he took horse forthwith, crying out, "Let all that love me follow." When he reached the coast, he found the weather very stormy, and the captain of the ship in which he wished to cross the sea was unwilling to set sail. "Hold thy peace, man," said William, "kings are never drowned."

CHAPTER XX.

THOMAS BECKET, THE CHANCELLOR.

THE Red King was succeeded by his younger brother Henry, who was surnamed Beauclerc, or Good Scholar, for he had been better educated than princes commonly were in those days, knowing even something of Latin. He did much for the better govern-

ment of England. His son and heir William was drowned, and on his death the succession to the Crown was disputed between his daughter Maud and Stephen of Blois. Maud had married Henry V., Emperor of Germany, and secondly Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou. Stephen was the son of Adela, daughter of the Conqueror. Then followed a time of great trouble, but in 1153, Stephen's son Eustace having died, it was agreed that Stephen should reign for the rest of his life, and Henry, son of the Empress Maud, should be king after him.

Henry II., who already possessed Normandy and Maine, received with his wife Eleanor the great province of Aquitaine, and had more of France than the King of France himself. What troubles came from these possessions in France to him and to others will be seen hereafter. But the story that I have to tell of this King concerns the famous Thomas Becket.

Not a few wonderful things are said to have happened to this Thomas while he was a boy. His father, who had given him over to be taught by certain priests who dwelt at Merton in Surrey, came one day to see him. When the boy was brought into his presence, he fell down before him, and did him reverence. The Prior cried out, "Foolish old man, what doest thou? dost thou fall at thy son's feet? That surely he should rather do to thee." But the

father answered—not indeed in his son’s hearing—“ I know what I do : that boy will be great in the sight of the Lord.”

Once when he was at home for holiday he had a marvellous escape from death. There lodged with his father a certain knight, who spent his time in hunting with hawks and hounds. Thomas would often go with him, having a great liking for this sport, in which when he grew up he also spent such leisure as he had. One day the knight went out according to custom, and Thomas followed him on horseback. They had to cross a certain swift stream. There was indeed a bridge, but it was so small and narrow that it could be safely passed only on foot. Below this bridge there was a mill with a wheel, towards which the stream ran with a very fast current, having a steep bank on either side. This bridge the knight, intent on his sport, and careless of danger, crossed first on his horse, and Thomas, fearing nothing, followed him. But when he came to the middle of the bridge, suddenly his horse stumbled, and both he and his rider fell into the stream. Here the two were parted by the violence of the current, and the boy was carried downward, nor did there seem any hope but that he would be either drowned or crushed by the wheel. But when he was now on the brink of death, the man that had charge of the mill, knowing nothing

of what had happened, suddenly shut off the water from the wheel. Meanwhile the knight and his company were following down the stream with piteous cries. These the man at the mill heard, the noise of the wheel being stopped. Coming forth he thrust his hand into the water, and drew Thomas to land scarce breathing and but half alive.

Thomas, growing up, obtained the favour first of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and then of the King, who made him Chancellor, he being then thirty-seven years of age.¹

When he was Chancellor, many nobles sent their sons to be in his house. These he caused to be duly trained and taught. Some he sent back to their parents fit to be good and true knights, and some he kept with himself. The King put his own son, Henry, in his charge.²

No man ever did the duties of his office more honestly and diligently than did Thomas. The King, the clergy, the nobles, and the people alike honoured him for his greatness of mind and his many virtues. With the King he had a close friendship ; and when business was done, they would play together like

¹ The King was Henry II., who came to the throne in 1154, and made Thomas Becket his Chancellor in the year following.

² Henry was only an infant, for he was born in the year in which Becket became Chancellor.

two boys of the same age. They sat together in church, and they rode out together. One day they were riding together in the streets of London, the weather being very cold. The King saw an old man coming, poor, in thin and ragged clothing. Whereupon he said to the Chancellor, "Do you see him?" The Chancellor answered, "Yes, I see him." *THE KING*—"How poor he is, how feeble, how poorly clad! Would it not be a most charitable deed to give him a cloak, warm and thick?" *THE CHANCELLOR*—"Verily it would; and you, my King, should have care that he have it." Meanwhile the man came up. Said the King to him, "Wilt thou have a good cloak, my friend?" The poor man, not knowing who these two might be, thought that he jested. Then said the King to the Chancellor, "You shall do this great charity." And laying hold of the cloak which he wore—it was new, and very fine, of scarlet and grey—he strove to drag it from him. The Chancellor strove to keep it. Then there was a great commotion and noise, and all the knights rode up, wondering what this might mean, for the two were pulling with both their hands, and more than once seemed likely to fall from their horses. At last the Chancellor suffered the King to have his way, that is to pull off the cloak and give it to the poor man. Then the King told

the story, and there was great laughter among the knights.

In the third year of his office, Becket went on an embassy to the King of France, to make a contract of marriage between his King's son Henry and the daughter of the King of France. Never did ambassador go more splendidly equipped. He had two hundred men on horseback, all of his own household, knights, esquires, clerks, serving-men, and young nobles whom he had trained in his house. All were clothed as became their rank. As for Thomas, he had four-and-twenty changes of raiment and many garments of silk and fur, and robes and carpets such as the chamber and bed of a bishop are wont to be adorned with. He had also hounds and birds of all kinds such as kings and nobles are wont to use. He had light carriages, drawn each by five strong horses. Of these, two bore nothing but beer, "a liquor made of corn with water, which the French greatly admire, for it is clear, and of the colour of wine, but better in taste." In one carriage was the furniture of his chapel, in another that of his chamber, and in a third that of his kitchen. Others carried meat and drink and divers other goods. He had twelve horses, and eight chests full of gold and silver plate, and many clothes and books, and other matters. Each horse had its own groom; under each wagon was a

dog chained, strong enough, it was said, to overcome a lion or a bear. And on the back of each horse was a tailed monkey. When the Frenchmen, rushing out of their houses, asked who this was and whose the train, it was answered to them, "It is the Chancellor of the King of the English, going on an embassy to the King of the French." Then said the



BECKET MADE ARCHBISHOP.

Frenchmen, "Marvellous is the King of the English, whose Chancellor goes thus grandly." Nor was he famous for these things only. When afterwards there was war between the two kings, the Chancellor had seven hundred knights of his own household, and many others. And he himself met in single combat a valiant French knight, and striking him down, spoiled him of his horse

When he had been Chancellor for seven years, the King sent for him, and told him that he was minded to make him Archbishop of Canterbury. Thomas was greatly unwilling that this should be. "I know," said he, "that if this be done, you will soon turn away your love, and regard me with the bitterest hatred. Already you do many things in respect of the Church which I like not. And now there will be stirred up endless strife between us." These words did not alter the King's purpose. Thomas, therefore, having been duly chosen, was made Archbishop, having being first ordained priest, for before this he was a deacon only.

CHAPTER XXI.

THOMAS BECKET, THE ARCHBISHOP.

WHAT Thomas had said, soon came to pass, for he fell out with the King. It would be long to tell all the causes of quarrel between them, but the chief was this, that the King desired to put the clergy under the common law of England, while Becket would have them judged by a law of their own, or by the

Pope. Once did Becket give way, but he soon repented of having done so, and this made the King even more angry than before. At last the King called him to come before an assembly of the earls and barons of the kingdom. When these were about to pronounce sentence against him, he refused to hear. "I am your father," he said, "you are laymen



DISPUTE BETWEEN HENRY II. AND BECKET.

only. I will not hear your sentence." Then he arose from his place, and went bearing his cross to the door. One of the King's friends following him called out that he was a traitor. Thomas turned on him and said, "Were I a knight, mine own hands would prove that thou liest." He mounted his horse, and rode back to the monastery where he lodged, but could scarcely manage his horse or carry his cross for the

multitude that thronged about him and asked for his blessing. After this he sat down to meat with a cheerful spirit, the chamber where he was being thronged with people. In the book that, according to custom, was read during the meal, came by chance the text, "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another." Hearing these words, he looked to one of his friends, as if taking these words to himself. That night he fled. Not without much toil and danger did he reach a place of safety. For a time he went afoot; not being used to this travelling he often tottered and fell. His companions besought a boy whom they saw to hire something for the holy man to ride. The boy ran to the nearest village, but was absent so long that Thomas's companions began to fear that he had betrayed them. At last he came back leading with him an ass, which, for a bridle, had a wisp of hay, and lacked a saddle. Still they were forced to be content; so, throwing a cloak on the beast, they made the holy man ride. For two miles he rode, then, thinking it both easier and more respectable to go on foot, he walked for the rest of the way with his companions. They passed a certain knight standing at the door of his house with a hawk upon his wrist. When he saw four men dressed as clerks going by, he looked at them closely, and said, "One of these is either the Archbishop of

Canterbury, or very like to him." To whom one of Thomas's companions answered, "Didst ever see the Archbishop of Canterbury travelling in such fashion?" Some say that Thomas was in greater danger of being known because, as was his manner, he looked lovingly on the hawk. At another place the landlord of an inn knew him by the slenderness of his hands, and by the kindness with which he gave portions of food to the children. As for the King, he was greatly enraged, and not being able to harm the Archbishop, banished all his kindred from England. It would be long to tell how the quarrel went on. At last it seemed that the two were reconciled. Thomas went to meet the King, and the King ran forward from the crowd, and saluted him, and talked to him in so friendly a fashion that it might have seemed there had been no enmity between them. But it was more a show than a reality. "Trust him not," said the King of France, "my Lord Archbishop, unless he gives you the kiss of peace." And this the King never gave.

After this Thomas went back to England, but he would not give way one jot in the matter that was in dispute, and he put under the ban the bishops and others that had held with the King. When he came to Canterbury the people and the clergy received him with all honour. From Canterbury he went to

London, and there also he was most honourably received.

When the King heard of these things, how that the bishops had been excommunicated—this the bishops themselves crossed the sea to tell him—and how great multitudes of the people went out to do honour to the Archbishop, he was greatly enraged. First he asked of the bishops, "My lords, what shall I do?" They answered, "It is not our part to tell you what must be done." But one of them said—it was the Archbishop of York—"My lord, as long as Thomas lives, you will have no peace nor quiet, nor will you see another good day." Then the King cried, "I have nourished and promoted to honour sluggish and wretched knaves who are faithless to their lord, and suffer him to be tricked in such infamous fashion by a base clerk."

Four knights of the household, hearing the King speak, and seeing how great was his rage, agreed together that they would kill the Archbishop, and departed for England, sailing from different ports. These four were Reginald Fitz-Urse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Morville, and Richard Brito.

Meanwhile the Archbishop had come back to Canterbury. On Christmas Day he preached to the people, taking for his text the song of the Angels of Bethlehem, "Peace on earth to men of good

will.”¹ At the end of his sermon he said that the time of his departure was at hand, and as he said this he wept. There was heard also throughout the church weeping and wailing, while the people murmured, “Father, why dost thou desert us so soon?” Afterwards when some one said to him that there had been in Canterbury, among the archbishops, one martyr, St. Alphege,² he answered, “It may well be that in a short time you will have another.” Nevertheless, when he sat down at table with his friends, he was merry after his custom.

On the fourth day after Christmas, that is the day following the Feast of the Holy Innocents, the four knights came to Canterbury. They pretended that they came by order of the King,³ and so had gathered a band of followers. It was past the dinner-hour when they arrived, and the Archbishop had risen from table, and had gone into an inner room to do some business. They who had waited upon the Archbishop were themselves dining, and invited the

¹ This is the way in which the words, “Peace on earth, and good will towards men,” stand in the Vulgate, or Latin translation of the Bible.

² St. Alphege was made prisoner when Canterbury was taken by the Danes in 1012. The Danes hoped that he would ransom himself by giving up to them the treasures of the see, but he refused to do so. Thereupon he was murdered.

³ In fact the King, suspecting their purpose, had sent an order to stop them, and at the same time to arrest the Archbishop.

knights, whom they knew as being servants of the King, to sit down with them. The knights refused, saying that they had business with the Archbishop. He consenting to see them, they were brought into the chamber where he was. They sat down without saluting him, and when he greeted them courteously, they answered him with anger. The Archbishop changed countenance, knowing that they had come for his hurt. Then Fitz-Urse, who seemed to be the ringleader among them, said, "We have somewhat to say to thee by the King's command; shall we tell it here before all?" The Archbishop, knowing what they were about to say, answered, "These things should not be spoken in private, but in public." The doorkeeper thereupon called back those who were in the chamber—for the Archbishop had commanded them to go out. But for this the knights would have killed him there and then, striking him with the shaft of the cross, which stood by, which they afterwards confessed. Then said Fitz-Urse again, "The King, after peace had been made between him and you, sent you back to your see, as you desired; now you have added new insults to the old, excommunicating those who have been on the King's side. Say, then, are you ready to answer for your misdeeds in the King's presence? It is for this that we have been sent."

THE ARCHBISHOP. "I have had no thought of doing wrong to my lord the King. But it is not just that he should be angry because the people come to meet me, and follow me when I go through cities and towns, seeing that they have been deprived of my presence these seven years past. Yet even now I am ready to satisfy him if I have done aught amiss. And as for the bishops, it was not I but the Pope that passed this sentence upon them."

THE KNIGHT. "Nay, but it was your doing that he passed it. Absolve them."

A. "I do not deny that it was of my doing ; but those whom the Pope has bound I cannot absolve."

THE K. "It is the King's command that you depart forthwith from this place with all your men. There can be no peace with you from this day."

A. "Cease your threats ; never again will I put the sea between me and my church. He that wants me shall find me here."

THE K. "What the King has commanded, that will we cause to be done."

A. "If any man shall break the laws of Christ's Church, I will not spare him."

THE K. (springing up from their seats). "You have said this to the peril of your life."

A. "Do you come to kill me ? I have committed my cause to the Judge of all."

FITZ-URSE. "In the King's name we command all that are here to hold this man, lest he should escape before the King shall have had full justice on his body."

When he had said this they went out, but the Archbishop followed them to the door, saying, "Here shall ye find me." Then returning to his place, he sat down and comforted his people, exhorting them not to fear. He had not been more cheerful if they had come, not to kill him, but to invite him to a bridal. The knights quickly came back armed with swords and axes and other weapons. Meanwhile the doors of the chamber had been barred; and they, finding that it was not opened to their knocking, turned by a private way through the orchard till they came to a wooden partition. This they cut through with their axes. The servants and clerks, frightened by the noise, fled in all directions; but certain of the monks urged the Archbishop to flee into the church. He refused, remembering that he had said that the knights should find him there. The monks then said that it did not become him to be absent from the church when Vespers were being said—for it was now the time for Vespers. And when he still was unwilling to leave the place, they laid hold of him, and dragged him by force, not heeding his cries that they should let him go, till they had brought him to

the church. When he came, the monks stopped saying Vespers, which they had begun, and ran to him, rejoicing that he was yet alive. But when they would have shut and barred the doors, he forbade them. "It is not meet," he said, "to make a fortress of the house of prayer ; though it be not shut up, it is able to protect its own." When he had said this, the knights entered the church, having their drawn swords in their hands.

All that were in the church now fled seeking shelter, some at the altars, some in hiding-places. Three only remained with the Archbishop. And indeed he might easily have escaped, for it was evening, and the crypt was at hand, in which were many dark recesses. Also there was a door hard by, and a winding stair which led to the roof of the church.

The knights cried out, "Where is Thomas Becket, traitor to the King and realm ?" When there was no answer, they cried again, "Where is the Archbishop ?" At these words he came down from the winding stair, for he had been dragged thither by the monks, and said in a clear voice, "I am here, no traitor, but a priest ; why do you seek me ? I am ready to suffer in His house, Who redeemed me. Far be it from me to flee from your swords." So speaking he turned to a pillar, on one side of which there was a chapel of

the Blessed Virgin, and on the other a chapel of St. Benedict.

THE KNIGHTS. "Absolve those whom you have excommunicated."

ARCHBISHOP. "They have not given satisfaction, and I will not absolve them."

THE K. "Then shall you die, and receive your deserts."

A. "I am ready to die, so that I may obtain liberty and peace for the Church by my blood ; but in the name of God I forbid you to hurt my people."

The knights laid hands on him, seeking to drag him out of the church, that they might kill him outside, or, it may be, carry him away prisoner. But he clung to the pillar. Fitz-Urse laid hold on him, but the Archbishop called him by an ill name, and said, "Reginald, touch me not, you owe me subjection." Fitz-Urse answered, "I owe no subjection to any, against my fealty to my lord the King."

Then Thomas, seeing that his hour was at hand, inclined his neck as one that prays, and joining his hands together, commended his cause and the cause of the Church to God, and to Saint Mary, and to Saint Denys. Thereupon Fitz-Urse, fearing lest he should be rescued by the people, leapt upon him suddenly, and smote him on the top of the head, wounding by the same blow the arm of a certain

monk, Edward Grim by name, who was holding the Archbishop round the body. Another knight dealt him a second blow on the head, but still he stood firm. At the third blow, he fell on his knees and elbows, saying in a low voice, "In the name of Jesus, and the protection of the Church, I am ready to



MURDER OF THE ARCHBISHOP.

embrace death." Then the third knight, with a stroke of his sword, cut off the crown of the head, so that the blood and the brains together flowed out on the floor of the church. With the knights there was a certain clerk, who for his ill life was called Maucherc.¹ He put his foot on the dead man's neck and scattered both blood and brains over the pavement. When he

¹ See "Beaucherc," on p. 146.

had done this, he called out to the others, "Knights, let us away, this man will rise up no more."

The King was greatly troubled when he heard of what had been done. There was nothing that he would not do to show his grief. He even went to the cathedral, and kneeling down in the place where Becket had been slain, submitted to be scourged by one of the monks. King Henry died in 1189, sorely troubled by the ill behaviour of his sons.

CHAPTER XXII.

KING RICHARD'S CRUSADE.

THE Crusades were expeditions undertaken by Christian nations at various times between the years 1095 and 1268, for the purpose of recovering out of the hands of its Mahometan conquerors the city of Jerusalem. The name *Crusade* is derived from one of the words which mean *cross*. This is in Latin *crux*, and in one kind of Old French *crois*, as in Modern French it is *croix*. Those who went on these expeditions were said to "take the cross," because they wore this as a badge, to show that they were going to redeem from the power of the unbelievers the city where Christ suffered on the cross.

The First Crusade was announced by the Pope in 1095. A monk called Peter the Hermit, in the following year, set out with a great number of men to the Holy Land. They were not prepared for the expedition, and nearly all perished before they got there. There were three other attempts of the same kind in that year, all of which failed, but in August 1096 the real Crusade, under Godfrey, Count of Bouillon, set out. Nearly three years afterwards, Jerusalem was taken, and Godfrey was made king.

The Second Crusade began in 1146 and ended in 1149. In 1187 Saladin, Sultan of Egypt, took Jerusalem. To recover it again out of his hand the Third Crusade was resolved upon in 1188 by Henry II., King of England, and Philip, King of France, who were joined by Frederic, Emperor of Germany. The war with Saladin was begun by the siege of Acre. This was the Crusade which Richard of England joined soon after the death of his father, Henry II. (July 1189).

There were six other Crusades. I shall tell you about the ninth and last in the story of Prince Edward.

When King Richard—who was called Cœur de Lion, or Lion's Heart—put the army which he had gathered together on shipboard that they might go

to the Holy Land, he made rules for their good behaviour, and set punishments for such as should offend. These were—

1. If a man slay his comrade on shipboard, let him be bound to the dead man and cast into the sea.

2. If a man slay his comrade on shore, let him be bound in the same way and be buried alive.

3. If a man draw his knife to strike another, or strike him so as to shed blood, let him lose his hand.

4. If a man strike another with his open hand, let him be dipped three times in the sea.

5. If a man revile another, let him pay an ounce of silver for each reviling.

6. If a man be found guilty of stealing, let him be shaven, and boiling pitch poured on his head, and feathers be shaken from a pillow on the pitch, and he be put ashore as soon as may be, that all may know him for a thief.

The King took his pilgrim's staff and scrip from the hands of the Archbishop of Tours. They say that when he leant on the staff, it immediately broke under him. He lingered long on his way, first in Sicily, and afterwards at Cyprus, to which island he went seeking the lady to whom he was about to be married, for the ship in which she sailed had been carried thither by a storm.

In the meanwhile they who had been besieging

the city of Acre had suffered much from war and disease and famine. They began to besiege it on the 22nd day of August. Six weeks or thereabouts after



RECEIVING THE PILGRIM'S STAFF.

this came Saladin, Sultan of Egypt, with a great army, desiring to drive away the Christians from before the town. A fierce battle was fought. At first Saladin

was driven back, losing his camp, and not a few of the best of his soldiers, while the Christians also lost many. But before the day was over, Saladin recovered himself and drove back the Christians in their turn to their camp. There the Grand Master of the Temple was slain with eighteen of his knights. As for Saladin, he lost his eldest son and his nephew, and many others. After this, there came fresh soldiers to the army of the Christians. These now fortified their camp, for they were in no small danger. On the one side was the city of Acre, with a strong garrison that was always prepared to sally out against them, and on the other side was Saladin the Sultan, having an army such as had never before been gathered together in that land, so far as any living man could remember. They were also in great need of provisions, for nothing could be brought to them except by way of the sea. So it happened that, as winter came on and the weather grew bad, and the number of men in the camp was very large, the famine was sore. A loaf that had been sold for one shilling before the coming of the new soldiers was sold for sixty, and the price of a horse was more than forty pounds of English money. Some were slain by the enemy in the siege, and some taken prisoners, but a greater number by far perished with hunger and disease.

At last, on the fifth day of June in the year 1191, King Richard sailed from Cyprus on his way to Acre.¹ Two days after, he met on the sea, not far from the harbour of Beyrout, a great ship. The King, doubting to whom it belonged, sent one of his officers in a boat, to inquire who commanded it. He brought back word that it belonged to the King of France. But when the King approached, he could hear no word of French, nor see any Christian banner or token. It was a very large ship, and very strongly built, having three great masts, and its sides covered with green and yellow hides.² One of the sailors said that he had been at Beyrout when the ship was loaded, and that he had seen the cargo which had been put into her, namely, a hundred camel-loads of arms of all kinds, bows, spears, and arrows, together with machines for the throwing of darts and stones. There was also, he said, a great store of provisions, and a number of men, eight hundred chosen Turkish soldiers, and seven Saracen commanders. Besides these stores and men, there was, he said, a great

¹ He had been at Marseilles in the month of August the year before. It took at that time fifteen days to sail with a favourable wind from Marseilles to Acre. Richard had wasted about nine months in Sicily and Cyprus, where he had been quarrelling with Christian princes.

² These were intended for protection against Greek fire (see next note), and for ornament.

store of Greek fire,¹ and two hundred deadly serpents.

The King, hearing this, sent another messenger. This man brought back the answer that the strangers were men of Genoa bound for Tyre. While he was doubting what this contradiction might mean, one of the seamen confidently declared that the ship belonged to the Saracens. "Cut off my head, or hang me on a tree, if I do not prove this beyond all doubt. Send a galley to follow them without any word of greeting, and see what they will do."

Thereupon the King sent a galley after the strange ship at full speed. When it came near without offering any greeting, the sailors began to hurl arrows and darts at the crew. When Richard saw this, he commanded that a general attack should be made upon it. But this was no easy matter, so well was the strange ship manned, and with such force did the missiles fall upon the Christians, being hurled from a vessel of so great a height. Our men, therefore, began to falter, and to relax their efforts. The King, seeing this, exclaimed, "What! will you let that ship

¹ "Greek fire," so called because it was invented and first used under the Greek Emperors of Constantinople, was a compound much used in warfare in the Middle Ages. One recipe for making it gives as the materials, sulphur, dregs of wine, gum, baked salt, pitch, petroleum, and common oil. These were to be boiled together.

escape unharmed? After winning so many victories, will you give way like cowards? Verily you will all deserve to be hanged on gallows if you suffer these enemies to escape."

Thus encouraged, our men leapt into the sea. Some of them bound the helm of the strange ship with ropes, so that it could no longer be steered. Others climbed up the sides, and scrambling over the bulwarks fell upon the Turks. At one time they had driven them into the forepart of the vessel, but others coming up from the hold drove the boarders back, killing some and compelling the rest to leap overboard.

And now the King, seeing that the ship could not be taken, with its stores and crew, without great loss, ordered his galleys to charge the enemy and pierce it with their beaks. Accordingly, drawing back a space, they drove against it with all their might, and pierced its sides with their iron beaks. The ship was stove in and began to sink. Thereupon the Turks leapt into the water, where many were slain and many drowned. But the King spared some thirty-and-five of them, namely the officers, and such as were skilled in the managing of engines of war. All the others perished; all the stores were lost, and the serpents were drowned. Verily, if that ship had got into the harbour of Acre, the town would never have been taken.

Certain Saracens, who had been watching what took place from the hills, carried the news to Saladin the Sultan. He, in his rage, plucked the hairs out of his head, crying, "Now I have lost Acre." Through all the hosts of the Saracens there was great weeping and wailing, for in that ship all the flower of their youth had perished.

The next day King Richard came to Acre. When the news of his coming reached the garrison they began to talk of giving themselves up, for they knew how great a warrior he was. Saladin too was willing to make peace, and he sent to the two kings—for the King of France was there also—pears of Damascus, an abundance of other fruits, and other presents. He would willingly have made peace with them, but Richard was resolved to have Jerusalem given to him, and this Saladin would not do.

At this time a certain Christian sent messages, written in Greek and Latin and Hebrew, from within the walls, from which the besiegers learnt much about the counsels of the enemy, but who this Christian was they did not know, either then or after the taking of the town.

CHAPTER XXIII.

KING RICHARD'S CRUSADE (*continued*).

THE besiegers were greatly encouraged by the coming of King Richard. "This is the man," they said, "for whom we have waited so long. Now that he is come, the assault will speedily be made, for he is the best of all the warriors in Christendom." But their hopes were delayed for a time by the sickness which came upon him a few days after his coming. This sickness held him for ten days or more. The King of France also suffered from the same, as did others in the host. The Count of Flanders was so ill that he died.

As soon as the King of France was recovered of his sickness, he busied himself with setting up engines of war in such places as seemed best. There he kept them at work day and night. To one of these engines, that was of great power, he gave the name of "The Bad Neighbour." The Turks within the city had one with which they answered this, calling it "The Bad Kinsman." Often did they destroy King Philip's

engine, but it was as often repaired. At last it broke down a great part of the chief wall of the city, and shattered also a certain tower which was called the "Accursed Tower." The Duke of Burgundy had also an engine, as had the Knights of the Temple, and the Knights of the Hospital of St. John, with which they did very great damage to the Turks.

Besides all these, there was a stone-sling which was called "God's Stone-sling." Near to this a certain priest preached continually, begging money for its repairing, and for paying those who gathered stones for it. King Richard himself had two stone-slings, marvellously made, with which he could hit the mark at an incredible distance. Another engine he had that was called "The Belfry," covered with closely-fitting hides, so that it could not be burnt with Greek fire, nor destroyed by stones. 'Tis certain that a single stone discharged by one of the King's engines slew twelve men. This stone was sent for Saladin to look at.

The King of the French had also various implements and engines of war. One of these was a contrivance made of hurdles, strongly bound together, and covered with raw hides. Under this the King would sit, his cross-bow in his hand, watching if any Turk should show himself on the walls. One day the Turks threw a quantity of Greek fire on to this thing,

aiming at it at the same time with a stone-sling. Between the two, it was utterly destroyed, to the great wrath of the King, who in his rage proclaimed, by the voice of a herald, a general assault for the next day.

On that same day Saladin had declared that he would cross the trenches and destroy the whole army of the Christians. He did not keep his word, but sent his lieutenant in his place. Under his leading, the Turks attacked the trenches with great fury, and were as firmly resisted by the French. The Turks, dismounting from their horses, advanced on foot. The two sides fought hand to hand, using swords, daggers, two-handed axes, and clubs furnished with iron teeth.

Meanwhile the men that had been set by the King of France to make mines had reached the foundations of the walls, and filling the space which they had made with logs, set them on fire. At last the wall—the beams on which it rested being burnt through—gave way, sloping by degrees, but not falling flat. The Christians ran up to make their way into the town by this place, and the Turks, on the other hand, ran up, resolved to drive them back.

In this fight a certain Alberic Clements did a very noble thing. Seeing that the French were labouring much but doing little, he cried out, "To-day I will either die or, with God's leave, enter Acre." Thereupon he climbed up by the ladder to the top of the

wall, and there stood, slaying many of the Turks, who rushed upon him from all sides. But when others sought to follow him, the ladder broke, for it could not bear the number of those that crowded upon it. Some were crushed to death, others were grievously wounded. As for Alberic, he was left alone on the wall, and there perished, pierced by wounds without number.

King Richard was now so far recovered from his sickness that he could turn his thoughts to the taking of the city. He caused a shed made of hurdles covered with hides to be brought up to the ditch outside the city wall. In shelter of this he put some of the most skilful of his crossbow-men. He was himself carried to the place on silken cushions, and lay there using his cross-bow, with which he was very skilful. Many of the Saracens did he slay with his bolts.

After this, that his men might be encouraged the sooner to make a breach in the wall, he proclaimed that he would give two gold pieces to every one who should pull a stone from the wall near to the Accursed Tower. This bounty he increased to three and even four gold pieces. Many stones did the young knights with their followers draw out, though the Turks attacked them fiercely all the while. The Turks themselves were in their turn assailed by the

machines. These hurled the stones with such force that no armour could stand against them.

At last, when the tower had in this way been brought to the ground, the King's men-at-arms attempted to take the town by storm. But the



SHOOTING WITH THE CROSS-BOW.

Turks came up in great numbers to resist them. At close quarters they fought with each other, hand against hand, and sword against sword. But as the English were few, and the Turks increased in number, the men-at-arms were compelled to retreat. Some

were slain with the sword, and not a few perished by the Greek fire, for the Turks used this abundantly.

The next day the leaders of the Turks offered to give up the city on condition that all the garrison should be suffered to depart with their arms and their goods. The King of France was willing to accept the condition, but King Richard would not enter an empty city after so long a siege.

Not long afterwards the city was surrendered on the terms that follow. The Turks should restore the Holy Cross, should give up such Christian captives as they had, and should pay a great sum of money for their lives, they being suffered to go whither they would without arms or food, and carrying nothing but their shirts. They should also surrender, as hostages for the due performance of these terms, the noblest of their number.

CHAPTER XXIV.

KING RICHARD'S CRUSADE (*continued*): THE KING
OF FRANCE GOES BACK.

AFTER these things, the King of France left the Crusade and went to his own country. He said that it was better that there should be one king rather than two to command the army. But some would have it that he went to lay hands on the possessions of a certain great noble that had died during the siege of Acre. He left a part of his troops behind him.

King Richard built again and strengthened the walls of Acre. This done, he marched to Joppa. On the way Saladin made a fierce attack on his rear-guard, but was beaten with such loss as he had not suffered for forty years before. The King found Joppa deserted by the Saracens. There he had a narrow escape of his life. He walked to a garden about a mile from the town, and falling asleep after his walk was attacked by a company of the enemy. Jumping immediately upon his horse, which a squire was hold-

ing not far away, he defended himself sturdily against the assailants. But he was in great danger. One of his attendants was taken prisoner, and another killed. One of the two horses, also, which had been taken for his use, was captured and its driver killed. The King fought his way through the enemy, but he left behind him a very costly girdle, ornamented with gold and precious stones. The horse was sent back by Saladin's brother.

After this the King took a great caravan which was coming from Babylon with provisions and arms for Jerusalem. His spies brought him tidings of its coming ; so, taking five thousand picked men with him, he fell upon it as it was on its way about sunrise. Nearly all the soldiers that guarded it were killed, and three thousand camels were taken, with four thousand horses and mules, and an immense quantity of booty.

Every battle that the King fought he won, and every town that he attacked he took ; but the great thing for which he had come on the Crusade, the delivering of Jerusalem out of the hand of the unbelievers, he could not accomplish. He came near to the Holy City indeed, as near as the village of Bethany, which is but two miles away ; but the city itself he did not attempt to take. They say that he would not even look at it, since he could not deliver

it, as he had desired. He himself laid the blame upon the King of France, who had drawn back from the work. Nevertheless, there were some who said that he might have done more had he been more steady in his purpose, and that he was in truth weary of the task which he had undertaken.

The King went back to Acre, intending to take ship, and so return to England. When Saladin heard this, he marched with all haste to Joppa, and fell upon the town. This he took, the garrison, and so many of the inhabitants as were able, taking refuge in the citadel. So soon as the news came to the King, he set out to help them. The main part of the army he sent by land, going himself with seven galleys by sea. When he came to Joppa he found the shore covered with enemies, and his knights advised him to wait till the army should arrive. While the council was being held, a priest swam out from the town to the King's ship. They asked him how things were in the town. He answered, "Many of the people have been slain by the unbelievers, but some have fled into the tower, and still hold out." When the King heard this, he cried, "Cursed be the man who will not follow me!" and leapt into the water. Many followed him; nor did the enemy on the shore wait for his coming, but fled, leaving the town.

The next day King Richard led out some three score knights and two thousand foot-soldiers by one of the gates of the town. He commanded the men to kneel with one knee upon the ground ; they held with one arm a shield that covered the body, with the other a lance, the end of which was firmly fixed in the ground. Behind the line of the kneeling men were the engines that cast the arrows, each with two men to manage it. One man put in the arrow, another pulled the string.¹ Seven times did Saladin's horsemen charge the line, and seven times were they beaten back. Then King Richard himself charged in turn. Never did a warrior bear himself more bravely. He bore down every champion that came against him. He saved from captivity knights of his own army that had been thrown from their horses and taken prisoner. When the enemy surrounded him, he cut his way out from the midst of them. While he was so fighting, his horse was wounded, and Saladin's brother, perceiving it, sent another one for him to ride.

After this day the enemy gave up the siege of Joppa ; but the King fell ill of a fever. So weak did he become, that he was content to ask for a truce, and

¹ Put rifles for engines and bayonets for spears, and the King's way of putting his men is a little like the "hollow square" in which our soldiers fight at the present time.

this Saladin was willing to grant. It was agreed that there should be peace for three years, and Saladin promised that pilgrims should be suffered to visit the Holy Sepulchre without being harmed or hindered.

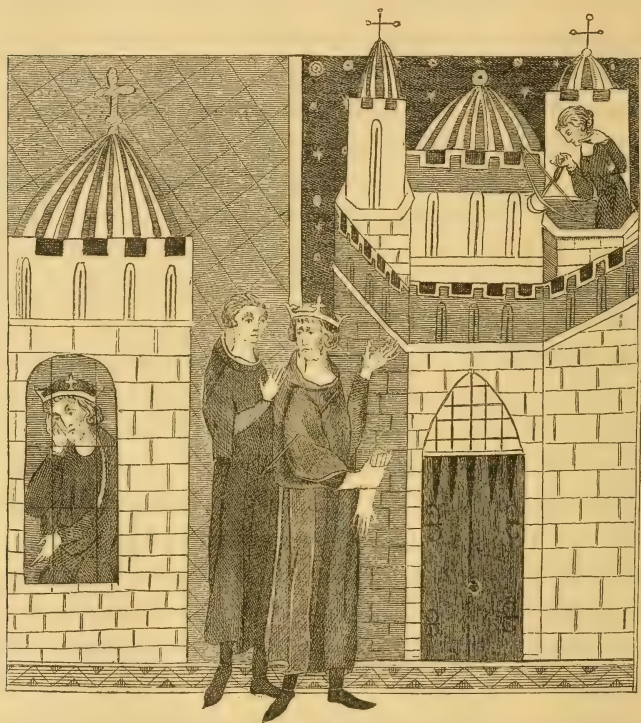
So soon as his sickness permitted, the King returned to Acre and then took ship. When he was about to pass out of sight of the shore, he turned to it, and stretching out his arms said, "Most Holy Land, I commit thee to the care of the Almighty. May He grant me life, that I may return and save thee from the bondage of the unbeliever!"

After various adventures the King was thrown by a storm on the coast of Austria. He had put on a pilgrim's dress, and had suffered his beard and hair to grow, and so hoped to pass unknown through the country. He knew that the ruler of the land had no good-will to him, for they had quarrelled during the siege of Acre. He sent, therefore, his page to a neighbouring castle with a present to the prince of the place, asking that passports might be given to Baldwin and Hugh the merchant, pilgrims returning home from Jerusalem. The lad took with him a fine ruby, as a gift to the prince. When the prince saw this, he cried out, "This is a king's gift. It is King Richard himself. Tell him that he may come to me in peace." But the King was afraid that some evil might be done, and having bought horses for himself and

his companions, he fled in the night. The horses were not sufficient for all; eight of the company remained. The King and seven knights escaped. When they came to the dominions of the next prince—he was brother of him that saw the ruby—a Norman knight that was in the prince's service knew the King, and warned him of his danger. Then the King fled again, taking with him one knight only, and a lad that knew the language of the country. For three days they travelled, neither entering any house nor buying any food; but on the fourth day, all their store being spent, they sent the lad to market. The townspeople, seeing the money that he showed, asked him about his master. "He is a rich merchant," said the lad; "and he will be here in three days." The King was now ill, and could not travel. When the lad went again to the market, the townspeople seized him and tortured him till he told his master's name, and the place where he was. So Richard was caught, Leopold, Duke of Austria, taking possession of him, and putting him into a prison. After a while the Duke sold him to the Emperor of Germany, and the Emperor, when he had kept him in prison for more than a year, set him at liberty, receiving from England a ransom of more than £200,000.

Richard was made prisoner on December 20, 1192, and set at liberty on February 4, 1194. There is a

very pretty story of how his favourite minstrel, Blondel by name, found out the place where he was kept in



RICHARD IN PRISON ; AND RICHARD WOUNDED.

prison. He went about singing the first bar of a song which the King and he had composed between them.

When at last he got to Richard's prison, he sang the first bar as usual, and was answered by the King singing the second. But this story seems not to have been written till hundreds of years after King Richard's time; and we may suppose it to be like the British minstrels' stories of Vortigern and King Arthur, partly fanciful, and partly true, for King Richard really was put in prison, and was fond of music and poetry.

Five years after his release, Richard was shot in the shoulder by an archer, as he was besieging a castle in France. The wound was not in itself mortal, but was so ill treated by an unskilful surgeon that the King died.

CHAPTER XXV.

MAGNA CHARTA.

KING RICHARD was succeeded by his brother John. Of all English kings he was the worst,—worse even than the Red King, being not only wicked, but weak. Yet from this weakness and wickedness there came, as we shall see, great good to the English people.

The chief nobles of England, seeing that no trust could be put in the King, and that his wrong-doing and oppression became worse from year to year, met



NORMAN NOBLES.

together at St. Edmundsbury in the county of Suffolk, to devise means how they might best secure the liberties of the people. Having agreed together

upon what things they should ask for this end, they also came to this resolve, that they would ask them at the Christmas next following, when the King should hold his court, to keep Christmas, as was the custom in those days.

This done, they went up, one by one, to the altar, and took an oath that if the King should refuse the things for which they asked, they would make war upon him, nor consent to peace till he should have granted them. At Christmas they could not get to speak with him, for he knew that they meant to ask what he was very loth to give; but twelve days afterwards they saw him and made their demands. After a while, it was agreed that the matter should be put off till Easter.

When Easter came the King was no more willing to yield than he had been before. He sent messengers to the nobles to ask them to write down their demands. But when he saw the paper, he cried out, "They might as well ask my crown of me! Shall I give them liberties that would make me a slave?" But when he heard that London had gone over to the party of the nobles, with whom, I should say, was Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, he thought it better to yield, though he was resolved in his heart to go back from his promises as soon as he should be able. Therefore, on the 19th day of June,

in the year 1215 (being the seventeenth year of his reign), King John and the nobles met on an island in the Thames, called Runnymede, that is between Egham and Staines, and signed what is called the Great Charter. By this it was provided, among other things—

1. That the Church of England should be free.
2. That the King should not oppress the nobles, nor the nobles such as were under them.
3. That London and the other cities and towns of the kingdom should enjoy the freedom which they had before possessed.
4. That causes of law should be tried in a fixed place.
5. That weights and measures should be the same everywhere.
6. That the King should not sell, or refuse, or postpone the doing of justice.
7. That every free man should be safe both for his person and his property from all damages, except such as might be done by the lawful judgment of his equals, or by the law of the land.

For all that remained of his life the King tried to undo what had been done by the signing of the Charter. He declared war against the nobles; he hired soldiers from abroad to fight for him, and he

obtained from the Pope a declaration that the Charter was null and void. On the other hand, the nobles sent to the oldest son of the King of France, if he would come over and help them. So there was civil war in the country—Englishmen fighting against Englishmen. But about twenty months after the signing of the Charter the King died. He was marching from Lincoln to King's Lynn, which is on the south side of the Wash, and in crossing the Wash he lost his baggage with all his treasure. Not many days after—on October the 19th—he died, but whether from trouble of mind, or from poison, or from some natural disease, is not known for certain. As for the Charter, the Kings of England have often tried to set it aside, but have never succeeded in so doing. One after another they have been forced to confirm it, and it is the foundation of English liberty.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE STORY OF PRINCE EDWARD.

WHEN King John died, his son Henry III. was a boy of nine years old. He reigned for fifty-six years, longer than any English sovereign, except George III. and Queen Victoria. He was married in 1236 to Eleanor, daughter of the Count of Provence, when he had been King for twenty years.

His eldest son was born on the 18th day of June, in the year 1239, and had the name of Edward given to him, to the no small pleasure of the people. For near a hundred and fifty years the kings had had French names, as William and Henry and Richard and John. But Edward was an English name, and the King that bore it would be English. He grew to be a tall and handsome youth, a brave soldier, one who loved to do justice, and who kept his word.

In his youth, while his father was alive, Prince Edward had many troubles. For the King was weak and favoured foreigners, as, for example, the kindred of his wife. These he put in offices of State, and

handed over to their keeping the strongest castles in the land. After a while the nobles of the land banded themselves together, and compelled the King to banish the strangers from England, and to put the castles into their hands. There was also to be a council of twenty-four who were to manage all the affairs of the kingdom. The King took an oath that he would do these things, and abide by the agreement which he had made. This oath Prince Edward also took.

After a while, the King, finding that the nobles had all the power in their hands, desired to depart from his agreement, but Prince Edward was not willing, for he was steadfast in keeping all the promises that he made. After much strife and contention it was settled that King Louis of France should be made judge of the whole matter, and then, having heard the cause of the King on the one hand and of the nobles on the other, should decide between them. These, therefore, he heard, and afterwards gave his judgment, which was this: "Let the agreement be annulled, and let the King have his castles again and his government as before." The nobles were greatly displeased at this judgment and would not accept it; but Prince Edward, feeling that he was now quit of his oath, took sides with his father, a thing which he had before been unwilling to do.

And now war broke out. It was proclaimed on the 3rd day of April, in the year 1264; and on the 13th day of May in that year the two armies met in battle, near the town of Lewes in Sussex. Simon de Montfort, who called himself Earl of Leicester, commanded the army of the nobles, while the army of the King was led by the King himself and his brother and Prince Edward, this last being at the right end of the line.

It so chanced that a great company of the Londoners were ranged in that part of the line which was opposite to the Prince. Now some months before, the men of London had grievously insulted the Queen, the Prince's mother, pelting her with stones and mud, as she came up the river Thames in her barge. The cause of their anger was that they blamed her more than any other for the favour shown to foreigners, as has been said before. The Prince was eager to take vengeance for this insult, and he charged the men of London with great fury, breaking their line, and driving them before him with much slaughter.

But while the Prince was pursuing his enemies, which, indeed, he did with more zeal and fierceness than was expedient, Simon de Montfort, who was skilful as a general before all the men of his time, fell upon the other part of the King's army, and overcame it. Many fled, many were slain, and not a few were taken prisoners.

That night Simon de Montfort sent certain friars to the King with this message: "I greatly desire peace; to the end that it may be made, I will set free all the prisoners whom I have taken. As for the matters that are in dispute, let us appoint six wise and honourable men to decide what shall be done.



RIDERS.

Only for a pledge let the King and Prince Edward give themselves into my keeping."

When he heard this, the Prince, who had before desired to renew the battle on the next day, consented to become a prisoner. For a time Simon carried him about whithersoever he went. But after a while he escaped in this manner. A certain noble

who visited him sent him as a present a very swift and strong horse. This on a certain day he bade a servant take out as if for exercise, only the man was to take care that wherever the Prince might be, the horse should be near at hand. The Prince then proposed to the men that were with him, watching him that he did not escape, that they should ride races. This they did, but when the horses of all were well tired, the servant came bringing with him the horse which he had in his charge. On this the Prince mounted and rode away, at the same time bidding farewell to his guards, and saying that he had had enough of their company. For a while they pursued him, but were easily outstripped. And when, having gone some way, they saw a party of horsemen come forth to greet him, they perceived that he was now out of their reach, and so returned to their own people.

So soon as the Prince was at liberty, many left the side of the nobles and joined themselves to him, so that day by day he grew stronger and they weaker. At last the end came about in this manner. The Prince came by surprise on the army which Earl Simon's son was leading to the help of his father. He and his men should by right have taken up their abode in the Castle of Kenilworth, but for comfort's sake they lodged in the village ; nor, so careless were

they, did they set any guard. The Prince's men fell on them while they slept, for it was scarcely dawn. Some were slain, some taken, and many fled without their arms, and also in a single garment. Among the prisoners were twenty knights with their banners.

Having done this, the Prince made as if he would march northward. But when the Earl Simon's spies had gone to him with this news, he turned suddenly to the east, and so approached before Earl Simon was aware. But when he had come so near that his men must needs be seen, he put in the front of his army the banners which he had taken. When Simon saw them, he said, knowing them to be the banners of his own friend, "It is well; my son comes to my help." Being thus deceived, he suffered the Prince to take up a strong place upon a hill that was near, without seeking to hinder him.

In the meanwhile one Nicholas, that was the Earl's barber, climbed to the top of a church-tower that was close by, and when he saw what had happened he cried out, "My lord, this is not your son's army, as you think, for I see in the front the Prince's banner, and on one side the banner of the Earl of Gloucester, and on the other the banner of Roger Mortimer." Thereupon the Earl himself went up to the top of the tower, and when he saw them, he said, "They come on right skilfully; but they have learnt it from

me." And when, looking further, he saw how many there were of them, and how he must needs be surrounded, he said again, "The Lord have mercy on our souls! our bodies belong to the Prince." His son would have had him flee while he had yet time, but the old man was not willing. "Far be it from me," he said, "so to end an honourable life!" There was no hope of victory; not only was the Prince's army by far the stronger, but the greater part of Earl Simon's men fled when they saw the enemy approach. He, with many nobles and knights about him, stood firm, and for some time Prince Edward, for all that he could do, could not break the line. But when the Earl of Gloucester came upon him from behind, there was an end of the battle. Earl Simon himself was killed, as were most of his comrades and followers; few were spared that day, for the hatred between the two parties that fought was very bitter, as it always is in civil war. King Henry himself, who was with the Earl's army, was at one time in no small danger, being attacked by his son's soldiers. Not till he cried out, "I am Henry of Winchester," did they leave him alone.

And now the Prince set himself to establish peace and order throughout England. Those that had taken part with Earl Simon were punished with fines; but none were put to death, for Edward was

always inclined to mercy. But when the civil war was ended, much still remained to be done. In many parts of the country there were men who had taken occasion by the late troubles to plunder their neighbours. It is said that the Prince, having heard of one of these, named Adam Gordon, who had his hiding-place in part of the New Forest, went to seek him. When he found him he challenged him to fight, bidding his followers leave them alone. Both were strong and skilful in arms, but at last the Prince wounded his adversary, who thereupon gave himself up and was pardoned. From that time this robber became a faithful follower of Prince Edward.

And now, all things being quiet, the Prince be-thought him of a vow which he had made, namely, that he would make a journey to the Holy Land. It so happened that at this time King Louis of France was preparing a Crusade. He was glad to have so valiant and skilful a soldier with him, and persuaded the Prince to join him. As for King Louis, he never reached the Holy Land. He and his army went to Tunis, in Africa, where he died of the plague, as did many of his soldiers. Prince Edward waited long for him, but at last, losing all hope of his coming, went with such men as he had, scarcely a thousand in all, to his journey's end. The town of Acre, which alone remained of all that had been won by the

Christian armies, was besieged by the Turks, and hard pressed. The Prince, while he waited for King Louis, had promised the garrison that he would help them, and was resolved, according to his custom, to keep his word. Some of his followers would have persuaded him to return to England, and some actually left him.¹ But the Prince would not be persuaded. "Nay," said he, "to Acre I will go, though none but my groom go with me." Setting sail, he reached Acre just in time to save it from being taken. The garrison had agreed to surrender the town to the Turks on the fourth day, unless help should come to them before. Many Christians now joined the Prince's army, till he had nine thousand men. With these he marched to the town of Nazareth, and took it by storm.

Not long after this he narrowly escaped death. An assassin,² sent by the enemy, made some pretence of having a message for him, and so got into his tent. He then stabbed him three times with a dagger. Then the Prince leaping up threw him to the ground,

¹ Among these was his cousin Henry, son of his uncle, the Earl of Cornwall. He was murdered in Italy, on his way back, by two of the sons of Simon de Montfort.

² The "Assassins" were followers of a chief who was known as "The Old Man of the Mountain." They bound themselves to murder any person whom he wished to kill. Their name comes from the word *hashish*, which means "one who chews *hashish*," *hashish* being an intoxicating gum made from hemp.

and killed him with his own dagger. But, though the wounds were not mortal, the surgeons that waited on the Prince could not heal them, and, fearing lest perchance the dagger had been poisoned, began to fear for his life. He saw that they whispered, and said, "Why do you whisper? Can I not be cured? Tell me without fear." They said, "We can cure you, but you must suffer great pain." "And then you promise that you will cure me?" "Yes, we promise." "Then I put myself in your hands. Do with me what you will."

Not many days after this the enemy sent messengers to treat for peace, and the Prince, seeing that he had not sufficient strength to accomplish that for which he had come, namely, to take the city of Jerusalem, consented.

Peace having been made, the Prince set out on his return to England. While he was on his way, he became King, his father having died. Everywhere he was received with great honour, excepting at one town in Burgundy. The Count of this place invited him to a tournament, and Edward, though he had been warned that some evil was meant, did not refuse to go. At the tournament the Count himself encountered the King, but, though he was very tall and strong, gained no advantage over him. Being angered at this, he threw away his sword and lance,

and catching the King round the neck, sought thus to drag him from his horse. This he could not do, but was himself dragged from his saddle, when the King spurred his horse. Edward, wroth at such behaviour, which was contrary to the rules of a tournament, beat the knight as he lay upon the ground with the staff of his lance; nor would he receive the Count's sword, when he would have submitted himself, but bade him give it into the hands of a man-at-arms. The Count's followers were much enraged by this, and fell upon the English. What had begun as a game was turned into a fight, and not a few were killed. Then, when the Burgundian knights had been driven off the field, the townspeople took up their cause, and wounded many of the English, nor would they cease till the King threatened that he would burn the town.

The history of King Edward cannot be conveniently told in this place. It must be enough to say that he conquered Wales, which country has remained since his time a part of England, and that he came near to conquering Scotland, and that he was as wise a king as ever ruled this realm. But of what he did, and of what laws he made, with the consent of the people—for that he looked for this is a notable proof of his wisdom—you will read elsewhere.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN.

EDWARD I. set his heart on making one kingdom of the island of Great Britain. First he conquered Wales; and to his son Edward, who was born just then in the Welsh town of Carnarvon, he gave the title of Prince of Wales.¹ Then he set himself to bring Scotland under his power. When it was doubtful who ought to be king, he was asked to decide, and he decided in favour of John Baliol, who was ready to acknowledge him as his superior. But the Scotch people were very unwilling to submit. John Baliol revolted, and Edward marched into Scotland, deposed him, and put English garrisons into the strong places. The Scotch rose against them under William Wallace, and defeated the English at Stirling (this was in 1297 A.D.) Then King Edward marched again into Scotland, defeated Wallace at Falkirk (1298), and conquered the country. Wallace escaped at the time, but was

¹ "A Prince of Wales," as he is said to have told the Welsh people, "who could not speak a word of English."

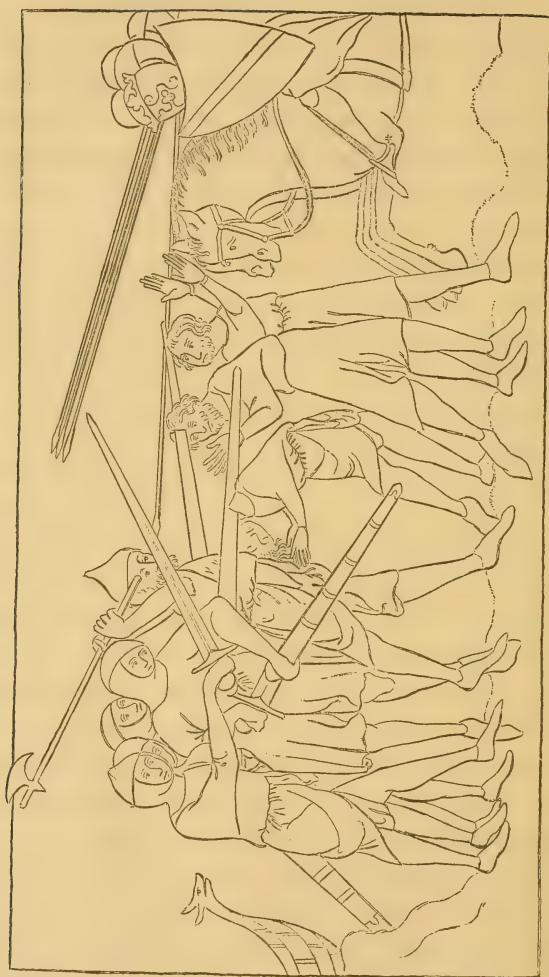
betrayed seven years afterwards, and executed as a traitor in London. The Scotch rose again under Robert Bruce. Edward was about to invade the country a third time when he died (at Burgh-on-Sands, in 1307). When he was dying he entreated his son (afterwards Edward II.) to carry on the war. It is said that he commanded that his bones should be carried in a chest with the army, so that even after his death he might still be helping to carry out his purpose. Edward II. paid no attention to these requests, but gave up the expedition. For the next seven years Robert Bruce became more and more powerful, and the English weaker. King Edward twice invaded Scotland, but both times failed to do anything. He was very unlike the great king his father, being careless and fond of pleasure; and thus all that Edward I. had gained in Scotland was lost by his son. So England and Scotland remained separate kingdoms for three hundred years more.

The English garrison in Stirling Castle, which was now almost the only strong place that was held in Scotland for King Edward, was hard pressed by the Scotch. Its commander offered to give it up to the besiegers, if he did not receive help by Midsummer Day (June 24). This was in the year 1314. When King Edward heard that the castle was in danger, he sent out messengers calling all the soldiers in

England to meet at Berwick-on-Tweed on the 11th day of June. Besides the English there was to be a great body of soldiers from Ireland. Altogether nearly one hundred thousand men assembled at Berwick. Robert Bruce had not been able to collect half as many.

King Edward now marched forward to relieve the castle (which was about ninety miles from Berwick). He reached it on Sunday, the 23rd of June, one day before the time on which it was to surrender. Robert Bruce had drawn up his army in three squares ; these three made one line, which reached from the brook of Bannock to the castle. Behind them was a fourth division, in which were the Highlanders and the men of the Western Isles and Bruce's own followers. In front of the line he caused some pits to be dug ; in these sharp-pointed stakes were fixed, and they were covered over with brushwood.

King Edward, as soon as he came in sight of the castle, sent a body of cavalry which was to make a round, and so getting past the line of the Scottish soldiers, to relieve the castle. Bruce saw what was going on, and blamed his nephew Randolph for letting the English horsemen pass him. "Randolph," he said to him, "a rose has fallen from your crown." Randolph at once rode off with a body of Scottish cavalry, and charged the English furiously. At one



KNIGHTS AND MEN-AT-ARMS IN BATTLE.

time it seemed as if they would be too strong for him, and Sir James Douglas went with part of the second division to help him. But just as he came up, he saw that the English were giving way ; there-upon he held his soldiers back. "We will not make the glory of these brave men less," he said. Bruce himself did a gallant deed that day. An English knight, Sir Henry de Bohun, rode out of the English line, mounted on a war-horse. Bruce went out to meet him ; all could see that he was king by the crown on his helmet. He was riding on a small palfrey, and he was armed with a battle-axe. The English knight rode furiously at him with his spear in rest ; but Bruce avoided the stroke, and, rising in his stirrups as the knight passed him, struck him a great blow on his helmet. The battle-axe was shattered to pieces, but the helmet was broken in, and Sir Henry de Bohun fell dead to the ground. This happened on the day before the battle.

Early on Midsummer Day the first line of the English army began to move forward ; a little behind came the main body, which was led by King Edward himself. As they advanced, they saw the whole line of the Scottish army kneel down. A priest was praying to God to help them in the battle, and all the soldiers kneeled as they joined in the prayer. "See !" cried some of the English ; "they are

begging for mercy." "Yes," answered one of the knights, "they are begging for mercy ; but it is from God." And now it could be seen how well Bruce had chosen his place. The English army was more than twice as large as the Scottish ; but only a part of it could get near the enemy. Some of the divisions had nothing to do with the fighting from the beginning to the end of the battle. They could not get near enough to strike a blow. Still there were some who fought well. There was a body of archers who poured their arrows fast and thick into the ranks of the Scottish soldiers, and struck many of them to the earth. When Bruce saw what damage they were doing, he sent a company of horsemen to charge them from the side. The archers had no swords with which to defend themselves, and when they were attacked in this way, they could not hold their ground, but broke and fled. The English line first stopped, then wavered, then began to fall back. When Bruce saw this he led his own division forward. The English knights charged fiercely ; but many of them fell into the pits. Their horses were lamed, and they themselves thrown. Still the Englishmen, being brave men, and accustomed to win battles, held out. Then, all of a sudden, there appeared upon the hills what seemed to be a new Scottish army. They were only the servants and

camp-followers ; but they had banners with them, and shouted like soldiers. This was more than the English could bear. For all that their leaders could do, they turned and fled. The slaughter was terrible ; for there had been war between the two nations for many years, and there were many things to avenge. Twenty-seven barons, two hundred knights, and thirty thousand men were killed that day. As for King Edward himself, he fled from the field of battle ; for sixty miles he rode almost without stopping, except to change his horse. When he reached Dunbar, he got on board ship, and went by sea to Berwick. The brave knight who was with him turned back, after seeing him safely off the field, rode back, charged into the middle of the enemy, and so was killed.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HOW KING EDWARD III. WON THE BATTLE OF SLUYS.

EDWARD II. was murdered in 1327. For three years his wicked wife, Isabella of France, with her

favourite, Roger Mortimer, ruled in England. Then Mortimer was seized and hanged, and Edward III. began really to reign. About seven years afterwards began what is sometimes called the Hundred Years' War between England and France. For this war there were several causes.

The King of England possessed a very large part of France. He did homage, indeed, for it to the King of France, but it was really his. The Kings of France, on the other hand, steadily worked to get these provinces into their own power ; and one of the means which they used was to help the Scottish people against England. England was trying to do with Scotland what the French King was trying to do with Anjou, Maine, and other English provinces.

Then, again, French rovers were busy plundering the English coasts. The Isle of Wight suffered much from them ; so did Sandwich and Rye, and other towns on the south coast. The important port of Southampton was attacked by them, and part of the town was burnt.

Finally, the English King, provoked by the attacks made on his French possessions, set up a claim to the Crown of France itself, and the chief pretext for this claim was Edward II.'s Queen, Isabella. I will explain how this came about. Philip IV. of France (1268—1314) left three sons, Louis, Philip and Charles.

Each of these became King in turn, but none of them left a son. By what was called the Salic Law, which was no law at all but only an old custom of the Franks no woman could rule in France. So when Charles IV., the youngest of Philip IV.'s sons, died, Philip of Valois succeeded him, as being the nearest male heir, though he was Charles's second cousin only. But Edward III., by the advice of his Parliament, claimed the French crown as son of Isabella, Charles's sister. He said, "Philip of Valois is second cousin only to the King ; I am his nephew ; so, being more nearly related to him, I have a better right to succeed him." He of course was obliged to allow that a woman could not succeed, not only because that was quite certain in itself, but also because otherwise Joan, daughter of Louis, Philip IV.'s eldest son, would have had a better right than he. But he maintained that though a woman could not herself succeed, her son might inherit, and that when the three sons were dead, the daughter's son had the best right.

I will now describe the first great battle of the "Hundred Years' War."

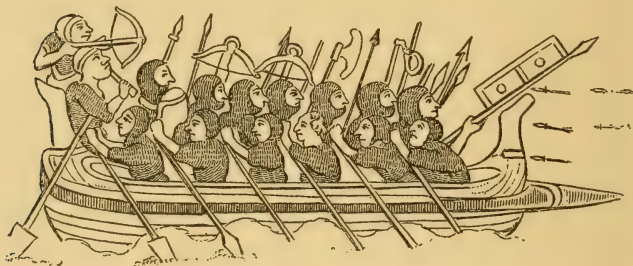
Two days before Midsummer Day in the year 1340, King Edward set sail with his whole fleet from the Thames, and made straight for Sluys, which was a seaport of the country called Flanders. The King

had it in his mind to help the men of Flanders against the French. Now at Sluys there lay more than one hundred and twenty large ships, and many small ones with them. On board of these were forty thousand men ; some were sailors, and others fighting men and archers from Picardy and Genoa. Certain knights commanded them, and a famous sailor whom they called "Blackbeard." The King of France had commanded that they should lie at anchor, waiting for the King of England, that they might hinder him from going any further. When the fleet had almost got to Sluys, the English saw so many masts standing before them that it seemed as if it were a wood. The King said to the captain of his ship, "What can these be?" The man answered, "I take it that this must be that fleet of Normans which the King of France keeps at sea. These are they that have done you so much harm, burning your good town of Southampton, and taking your large ship the *Christopher*." To this the King made answer, "I have now for a long time desired to meet with these men ; now, please God and St. George, we will fight with them. In truth they have done me much mischief, and I will revenge myself on them, if it be possible." Thereupon the King caused all his ships to be drawn up in line. The strongest he put in front, and on the wings the ships in which the archers were embarked. Between

every two vessels with archers was placed one with men-at-arms. Other ships, full of archers, he kept in reserve. These were meant to give help to any that might seem to need it. Besides sailors and soldiers, there were in the fleet many ladies from England, countesses, and baronesses, and wives of knights and gentlemen, who had come to attend upon the Queen, for the Queen was at this time in Ghent. To guard these ladies with all care, the King had appointed three hundred men-at-arms and six hundred archers. When the King and his marshal had set the fleet in order, they hoisted all their sails, so that they might have the sun behind them, for before it had been shining in their faces. This they thought would be against them. When the Normans saw them tack, at first they wondered what this might mean. Afterwards they said, "See, they take good care to turn about, for they are afraid to meddle with us." And indeed the English had before been sailing straight towards them, and now changed their course. When the Normans knew that the King was on board, seeing his banner, they were very glad, for they were very eager to fight with him. So they put their vessels in order, a thing which they did well, being brave and skilful seamen.

First of all they made the *Christopher*, a big ship which they had taken from the English the year

before, fall upon the King's fleet. They had filled it with fighting men, and had put trumpeters on board. With this the battle began, very fiercely. Archers and crossbow-men shot with all their might at each other, and the men-at-arms engaged hand to hand. And that they might not be separated by the moving of the vessels, they had large grapnels, and iron hooks with chains, which they flung from ship to ship to



CROSSBOW-MEN IN A BOAT.

moor them to each other. The *Christopher*, which, as has been said, came first of all the French fleet, was taken again, and all in her were either killed or made prisoners. The English, having taken her, filled her with archers, and sent her against the men of Genoa.

Never was battle fiercer and more murderous than this. And, indeed, fights at sea are more deadly than fights on land, for none can flee; every man must stay

where he is and meet his fate. From early in the morning until noon did the battle last. But though the English were hard pressed, for the enemies were four to one, besides being men used to the sea, in the end they won the victory, being somewhat helped by ships that came to them from the harbours on the coast hard by. Scarcely one of the Normans escaped with his life.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE BATTLE OF CRÉCY.

IN July 1346, six years after the battle of Sluys, Edward III. landed at La Hogue in Normandy. His plan was to march eastward and join the Flemings (people of Flanders), who were in alliance with him, and who had themselves invaded France. He got as far as Rouen, but found there that the bridge over the Seine had been broken down, and that King Philip of France was on the opposite bank with a large army. Edward then marched towards Paris, as if he were going to attack it, and when the French king followed him, suddenly turned back, and

got across the Seine. He then marched on and came to the river Somme. Here again all the bridges had been broken down. Three times he tried to cross the river, but in vain. At last a peasant told him of a ford over the river known as Blanchetaque (from the white stones in the bed of the river). He crossed by this, but not without a fight. Marching a few miles further on he came to a place called Crécy, about ten miles from the ford of Blanchetaque, which is between Abbeville and the sea. Here he determined to fight, and waited for the French king, who was following him with an army much larger than his own. For when King Edward came to Crécy, he said, "Let us post ourselves here; we will not go further till we have seen our enemies. And indeed I have good reason to wait for them in this place; for this is the inheritance of my mother, which was given to her for a marriage-portion, and I am resolved to defend it against my adversary King Philip."

Here then the King pitched his camp. That evening—the day was Friday—he gave a supper to the earls and barons of his army. When they were gone, he fell on his knees and prayed to God that, if he fought with his enemies on the morrow, he might come out of the battle with honour. The next morning he and the Prince of Wales received the Holy Communion, as did also the greater part of his

army. After this he commanded that the army should be drawn up in three divisions. In the first he placed the young Prince of Wales,¹ with the Earls of Warwick and Oxford, and many other nobles and knights. In this division were about eight hundred men-at-arms, two thousand archers, and a thousand Welshmen. There were in all about eight thousand nine hundred men, of whom about half were archers.

The army having been thus ordered, the King mounted a small white palfrey, and rode at a foot's pace, having a marshal on either side, throughout all the ranks, encouraging and entreating the army that they would guard his honour and defend the right. When he had gone through all the battalions, it was ten o'clock in the forenoon. He ordered that every man should have his meal, and drink a glass after. So the men ate and drank at their ease, sitting on the ground, having their bows and helmets before them on the ground, that they might be the fresher when the enemy should come.

The King of France and his army had lodged that night at the town of Abbeville, so that by the time they came near to the English they had marched already six miles or more. Four knights rode on to see what they could find out about the English, and these, when they returned, counselled King Philip

¹ He was then sixteen years of age.

that he should advance no further that day, but quarter them for the night where they were. "For," said they, "if you will wait till the rear shall come up it will be late, and your men will be weary, but the enemy will be fresh and in good order. Take then your own time, and be sure that they will wait for you." This counsel seemed good to King Philip, and he commanded that it should be done accordingly. So the marshals rode, one to the front, and the other to the rear, crying, "Halt, banners, in the name of God and St. Denys!" The front indeed halted, but the rear pushed forward, saying that they would not be behind any. And when the front saw this, then they advanced also, and neither the King nor the marshals could stop them. So the army marched on till they came within sight of the English. Then the front ranks fell back, to the no small fear of them that were behind, who thought that the fighting had already begun. As for the confusion and bad ordering of the French, no one could say how great it was, who did not see it.

The English, on the other hand, when they saw their adversaries approach, stood up from the ground on which they were sitting without fear, and fell into their ranks. The first so to do was the Prince's division, having the archers in front and the men-at-arms in the rear. On either wing was a part of the

second division, drawn up to give him help, if it should be needed. As for the third division, with which was the King himself, it was the hindermost of all. So the English stood in good order, but the French came on just as it seemed good to them, each man going his own way.

When the King of France first saw the English, his blood began to boil, and he cried to his marshals, "Order the Genoese forward and begin the battle." These Genoese carried cross-bows, and they were some fifteen thousand in number. But they were very weary, for they had marched eighteen miles that day, clad in armour and carrying their cross-bows. They told the Constable of France, "We are not in fit condition to do much this day." Thereupon he cried out, "This is what one gets by employing such scoundrels, for when there is most need of them, then they fall off." About this time there was a very heavy rain, with thunder and lightning. Also there was an eclipse of the sun ; and before the rain a great cloud of crows was seen to hover over the two armies, making at the same time a great noise. Then the sun shone out, but so that the Frenchmen had it in their faces, and the Englishmen on their backs. The Genoese being by this time somewhat in order, approached the English, and set up a loud shout, with which they thought to frighten their

adversaries. But the English stood still and took no heed. Then the Genoese shouted again and came a little forward ; but the English never moved. A third time they cried out, holding their cross-bows forward, and began to shoot. Then the English archers also advanced, taking one step forward, and shot their arrows with such force and quickness that one had thought it snowed. When the Genoese felt the arrows piercing through heads and arms, and through their armour, many of them cut the strings of their cross-bows and cast them on the ground and fled. When the King of France saw them flying, he cried, "Slay these rascals, for they do but hinder us." Then the men-at-arms dashed in among them, and slew many of them ; and all the while the Englishmen shot where the press was thickest ; the men-at-arms and their horses were pierced with the arrows, and fell in the midst of the Genoese ; nor when they had fallen could they recover themselves ; so thick, of a truth, was the press that they overthrew each other. The Welshmen also went on foot with their long knives among the men-at-arms, and slew many, both earls and knights and squires, a thing at which King Edward was afterwards much displeased, for he had sooner that they had been taken prisoners.

In this battle was slain a very valiant man, the King of Bohemia. When he heard how the battle

had been ordered, he asked, "Where is my son, the Lord Charles?" His people answered, "We know not, but we believe that he is fighting." (The Lord Charles had come to the battle, but when he saw that it was likely to turn against the French, he departed.) Then said the King, "Gentlemen, you are all my people, my friends, and my brethren-in-arms this day; therefore, as I am blind, I beg of you that you will lead me so far into the battle, that I may be able to strike one stroke with my sword." The knights answered that they would forthwith lead him as he desired. And that they might not lose him in the crowd, they fastened all the reins of the horses together, and putting the King at their head, that he might have his wish, so advanced towards the enemy. Then the King made good use of his sword, and his companions also fought most gallantly. So far did they go with the press that they were all slain. On the morrow they were found upon the ground, with their horses all tied together.

None fought on the side of the French more valiantly than the Constable of France and the Earl of Flanders. These two, with their companies, came to the place where the Prince's division stood, and fought there right valiantly. There too the King of France would fain have joined them, but could not, for there was a hedge of archers between him and them.

Here must be told an adventure of a certain knight that followed Sir John of Hainault. The King of France had given that day a very handsome black war-horse to Sir John, who mounted his own standard-bearer upon the beast. The horse ran away with its rider, and passed through the English army from front to rear without receiving any hurt. Then, as it was about to come back, it stumbled and turned the knight into a ditch, hurting him greatly. In truth, the man would have died but for his page, who had followed, and found him in the ditch without any power to raise himself out of it. This he now did with the page's help, and so returned safe to his own people, though not by the same way as that by which he came. He had fared worse, but that the English did not quit their ranks that day to make prisoners.

Before the battle had continued any long time, a number of soldiers, Frenchmen, Germans, and men of Savoy, broke through the archers of the Prince's division, and came to blows with the men-at-arms. The Prince had been hard pressed at that time but for the second division, which came quickly to his help. But before their coming, the leaders of the Prince's division, seeing the danger they were in, sent a knight in great haste to the King, who had taken his stand near a windmill on a hill. The knight said, "Sir, the lords that are about your son are vigorously

attacked by the French ; they entreat, therefore, that you would come to their help with your battalion, for if the number of the enemy should increase, they fear that the Prince will have too much to do." The King answered, "Is my son dead, or wounded, or felled to the ground?" "Nay, sir," said the knight, "he is not so ; but he is so hard pressed by the enemy that he has need of your help." "Then," the King answered, "return to him and to them that sent you hither, and tell them from me that they do not send to me again this day, or look for my coming, so long as my son shall live ; tell them also that they suffer him this day to win his spurs,¹ for I am determined that, if it please God, all the glory and honour of this day's battle shall come to him, and to them into whose hands I have committed him." The knight returned and delivered this message to the lords. It greatly encouraged them, and they repented that they had asked for help.

As the day drew to an end, the King of France had but sixty men with him. Then Sir John of Hainault, who before this had given him a fresh horse, when that on which the King rode had been slain with an arrow, said to him, "Sir, retreat while you have the chance ; do not expose yourself thus to danger ; if you have lost the battle to-day, yet

¹ The sign of a knight's rank.

another day you will be conqueror." So saying, he laid his hand on the bridle of the King's horse, and led him away by force ; for this was not the first time that he had begged him to retreat.

By this time the Frenchmen were altogether in confusion, and their army broken up into small bands, which wandered up and down without any leader, and falling in with the English, were mostly destroyed. The English did not stir from their place to pursue or to take prisoners ; but when, about the time of vespers,¹ they heard no more shouting or crying, or voices of men calling to their lords, they considered that they had won the victory. As it grew dark, they made great fires and lighted torches. King Edward, who all that day had not put on his helmet, then came down from his post, and, with his whole battalion, advanced to the Prince of Wales. He took him in his arms and kissed him, saying, " Sweet son, God give you grace to go on as you have begun ; you are my son, for you have acquitted yourself well this day ; you are worthy to be a king." Thereat the Prince bowed very low, humbling himself before his father.

That night the English offered thanksgiving to God, for that He had given them the victory ; this they did without any rioting, for the King had forbidden all noise or riots.

¹ Evening service, about six o'clock p.m.

On the day that followed, that is, Sunday, there was so great a fog that one could not see a hundred yards. The King sent out a company of five hundred



EDWARD III. AND THE BLACK PRINCE.

lances and two thousand archers to see if there were any bodies of French collected. This company fell in with a division that was coming from Abbeville to join King Philip, having been told that he would not

fight before Sunday. They thought that the Englishmen must be their own countrymen, and hastened to join them. When they found out the truth there was a short fight, but the French soon turned and fled in great disorder. Many were slain ; indeed, had it not been for the fog, not one would have escaped.

The same thing befell a company that was coming to the help of the French King, under the command of the Archbishop of Rouen. For a time they held their ground, for there were brave knights with them, but in the end were almost all slain. Many other bands that came from the towns round about perished in the same way. 'Tis said that there were slain on this Sunday morning four times as many men as had perished in the battle.

When the King knew that the French had no thought of collecting another army, he sent two lords, with three heralds, and two secretaries to count the dead. These were all the day about their work, coming back to the camp as the King was about to sit down to supper. Their report was that they had found eighty banners, and the bodies of eleven princes, twelve hundred knights, and thirty thousand common men.

CHAPTER XXX.

HOW CALAIS WAS TAKEN.

AFTER King Edward had won the Battle of Crécy, he laid siege to the town of Calais, which he was especially desirous of taking because the inhabitants had been accustomed for many years to do great damage to English ships in the Channel. The King did not attack the town, for it was too strong, but he blockaded it, knowing that sooner or later hunger would compel the inhabitants to surrender, unless indeed the French King should come to their help, and of this, after winning so great a victory at Crécy, he had not much fear.

First he encamped his army, building for their better lodgings houses of wood. These made, as it were, a town, being laid out in streets. Twice a week a market was held, where provisions and all kinds of merchandise could be bought, for traders came to it from England and Flanders. As for the Governor of Calais, when he saw what the King was doing, he sent a great number of the poorer people, with

women and children, out of the town. King Edward suffered them to pass safely, and gave them besides a dinner and two shillings in money to each of them.

After a while the King, finding that the people of



BESIEGERS.

Calais received supplies by sea, caused a large castle to be made, so strong that it could not be destroyed, and fortified it with all kinds of instruments of war. This he set up between the town and sea, and put in it a garrison of forty men-at-arms and two hundred

archers. By this the harbour of Calais was guarded so closely that nothing could go in or out without being either taken or sunk.

Meanwhile the King of France, being very unwilling to lose his town of Calais, had gathered together a very large army—two hundred thousand men, it was said—for its help. But finding that he could not come near to the town, for King Edward had very skilfully guarded all the approaches, he sent certain nobles with this message: "Sir, the King of France desires to say that he has come to give you battle, but cannot find any means of approaching. Will you send some of your counsellors that they may confer with counsellors that he shall himself send, and choose some place where a battle may be fought." The King of England made this answer: "I have been here some twelve months, and have spent here some great sums of money; by this time, also, I have accomplished so much that I must in a very short time be master of the town of Calais. Therefore I am not inclined to do what the King asks, or to give up that which I have gained. If he and his army desire to pass, they must find some way for themselves."

After this two Cardinals came from the Pope, endeavouring to make peace. So much they accomplished that four nobles of the English and as

many of the French met together and deliberated. But they could come to no agreement. In the end the King of France departed, and disbanded his army.

The people of Calais, seeing that all hope of help was lost, and being hard pressed by hunger, desired their Governor to ask for conditions of peace. This the Governor did, but King Edward would grant no conditions whatever. "You must give up yourselves," he said, "to be dealt with as I will. Such as I please I will suffer to ransom themselves, and such as I will I will put to death." But when the English nobles and knights heard this, they said to the King, "You set, Sire, a bad example if you put these people to death ; nor shall we, when you bid us go to any of your castles, obey you so cheerfully, fearing lest the King of France may deal with us in the same way, if we should be taken." The King answered, "I will not hold out against you, but on this I am resolved ; six of the chief citizens of Calais shall come to me with halters round their necks, their heads and feet bare, and the keys of the town and castle in their hands. With these I will deal as I please."

There was great trouble in the town when this message was given, for how should the six be chosen ? At last one Eustace de St. Pierre stood up and said, "It would be a grievous thing that the whole town

should perish. I, therefore, trusting to find grace with God, if I die for my townsmen, offer myself as first of the six." Then five others offered themselves.¹

These six, therefore, with the Governor, went to the King, the Governor riding on a pony because he was wounded. They fell on their knees before him, and begged for mercy. The King would not listen, but commanded that their heads should be cut off. In vain did his chief counsellors beg him to change his purpose, saying that his reputation would be greatly injured, if he should show himself so unmerciful. At last his wife, Queen Philippa, fell on her knees before him, saying, with tears, "I pray you, Sire, for the love that you bear for me, to have mercy upon these men." To her the King answered, "Ah, lady, I could wish that you had been in any other place than this to-day. Nevertheless I cannot refuse the thing which you ask in this way. I give you, therefore, these men to do with them as you please." Thereupon the Queen commanded that they should be taken to her apartments, and should be well clothed and fed. After this, giving to each six nobles, she sent them away.

¹ Four of their names are given, the other three are John Daire, James and Peter Wissant.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE GREAT BATTLE OF POITIERS.

PHILIP, who was king when the Battle of Crécy was fought, died in 1350, and John, his eldest son, succeeded him.

In 1355 King John, hearing that the Black Prince had come out of Bordeaux, and had ravaged the country far and wide, gathered a great army, which he posted in such a way that the English could not return to Bordeaux without fighting. He made three divisions of his army, in each of which were sixteen thousand men. This done, he said to three of his knights, "Ride as near to the Englishmen as you can; see how many there are; observe whether or no they are in good spirits, and find how we can best attack them." Then he rode himself, being mounted on a white palfrey, to the head of his army, and said thus, "You have often threatened what you would do to the English if you could find them. Now I will lead you to them, so that you can revenge yourselves for all the harm they have done you; for

be sure that we shall not now part without fighting." Those that heard him answered, "Willingly will we meet them, God helping us." When the knights came back, they said, "We have seen the English, and find that there are two thousand men-at-arms, four thousand archers, and fifteen hundred footmen. These make one battalion only; but they are well and skilfully posted." "How shall we attack them?" said the King. The knights answered, "On foot, except that there should be three hundred of the boldest and best fighters in your army, well armed and well mounted, to break, if possible, the body of archers, for their archers are posted in front." The King said, "So it shall be." And he rode with his two marshals through the army, and chose out three hundred knights of the greatest repute in the army. Nineteen knights also were chosen who clad themselves in armour like the King's armour.

When the French were just about to advance, a certain Cardinal came to King John, and said, "Sir, you have all the flower of France with you, and the English are but a handful of men. It would be greatly to your honour if you could gain them without a battle. Let me go to the Prince and show him in what great danger he is." King John said, "Go, but make haste." So the Cardinal rode to the camp of the English, and spoke to the Prince, who said that he was ready to listen to any reasonable terms.

All that day—it was Sunday—the Cardinal rode backwards and forwards between the two armies. But he could not bring them to an agreement, for the King of France would be content with nothing short of this, that the Prince and a hundred of his knights should surrender themselves ; and the Prince and his counsellors would not consent to any such thing.

When the Prince saw that there would be no agreement, he said to his men, “We are but few compared to our enemies. But be not therefore cast down, for victory does not always go with numbers, but as it may please God. If we win this day, great will be our glory ; if we die, I have a father and brothers, and you have kinsmen, who will avenge our deaths. And now I entreat you to quit yourselves like men ; as for me, if it please God and St. George, you will see me behave myself as a brave knight.”

After this the battle began. The battalion of three hundred French knights that should have broken through the English archers, first advanced. But the archers, being on the sides of the lane by which they came, began shooting upon them so well and fast that their horses, smarting from the wounds made by the arrows, could not go forward, but turned about. Their riders could not manage them, but were thrown, and such as were thrown could not rise again, such was the press. Some indeed of the knights’ esquires broke through the hedges, but, even so, they could

not reach, as they desired, the battalion of the Prince. This battalion, then, being beaten, fell back upon those that were behind, and these again on the second division, and when those in the second division heard what had happened, many of them mounted



KNIGHTS IN BATTLE.

their horses and rode off. Now the Prince had posted three hundred men-at-arms and as many archers on a hill that was close by. This he did that they might be ready to fall on the second division of the French, if they should see occasion. And this they now did, seeing the division falling into confusion. And here

again the English archers did infinite service, for they shot so thickly and well that the French did not know whither to turn themselves to escape the arrows.

When the English men-at-arms saw that the first division of the French was beaten, and the second fallen into disorder, they mounted their horses, which they had ready at hand. Then Sir John Chandos, who had been by the Prince all the day, said to him, "Sir, sir, now push forward, for the day is ours ; God will certainly put it in our hands. Let us make for the King of France, for the chief of the battle will be where he is ; I know well that his valour will not suffer him to fly. He will remain in our hands, if it so please God ; but we must do our best. You have said, sir, that you would show yourself a good knight to-day." The Prince said, "Go forward, Sir John ; you will not see me turn my back this day, but I will be always among the foremost." Then he turned to his banner-bearer, and said, "Banner, advance !" And this the knight did. Very fierce and crowded was the fight in that part of the field. Many a knight was beaten down from his horse, and if any one fell, he could not rise again, unless he was helped well and quickly. And all the while the English archers shot so well that none dared to come within reach of their arrows.

And now the second division was in full flight, and there remained the third only, which the King of

France himself commanded. A good knight did the King prove himself; had but a fourth part of his followers behaved themselves as well, he had won the day. Many a valiant stroke did he deal with his battle-axe, for it was with this that he fought and defended himself. But there were only a few that stood by him. The greater part fled as fast as they could, hoping to find shelter within the walls of Poitiers. But the men of Poitiers shut the gates of the town, so that there was a great slaughter on the causeway before the gates. In such terror were the French, that many gave themselves up for prisoners as soon as they saw an Englishman. There were many English archers that day that had four prisoners, or even five or six. As for the King, there was much pressing to take him; all desired to have such a prisoner, and cried out to him, "Sire, surrender yourself, or you are a dead man." But the one that had the good fortune to take him was a young squire, Denis de Morbeque by name. He was a Frenchman by birth, but served the King of England, having been banished for killing a man in a quarrel. Chancing now to be very near to the King, he pushed through the crowd, for he was very strong, and said to the King in good French, "Sire, Sire, give yourself up." The King answered, "To whom shall I give myself? Where is my cousin the Prince of Wales? If I could see him, I would speak to him." Sir

Denis said, "He is not here; but give yourself up to me, and I will lead you to him." Thereupon the King gave him his right glove, and said, "I give myself up to you." Still there was much pushing, many crying out, "It was I that took him."

Meanwhile the Black Prince, by the counsel of Sir John Chandos, had pitched his banner, that his men might join together again, for they were much scattered. The banner was placed on a high part, and a tent of crimson silk was pitched for the Prince. He took off his helmet and sat down, and his knights brought him some wine. Every moment the crowd in the place grew greater, as the knights came back and brought their prisoners with them.

When his marshals came back, the Prince said to them, "Where is the King of France?" They answered, "We do not know for a certainty; but he must be killed or taken prisoner, for he has now left his division." Then the Prince bade two of his nobles take their horses and ride over the field that they might get certain news of him. Accordingly the two rode to a small hill, from which they might get a view of the plain. Thence they saw a crowd of men-at-arms on foot, which were coming towards them very slowly. The King of France was in the midst of them, and in great danger, for the English and the Gascons had taken him from Denis, and were disputing who should have him. One would

bawl out, "'Tis I that have got him," and others would reply, "No, no ; we have him." The King said, "Gentlemen, take me quietly to the Prince, and do not make a riot about me, for I can make all of you sufficiently rich." The barons set spurs to their horses, and riding up to the crowd, asked what was the matter. "It is the King of France," was the answer ; and as many as ten knights and squires declared that he was their prisoner. Thereupon the barons commanded all to draw aside, forbidding any to approach, under pain of instant death, unless they should be called. This done, they dismounted, and making a profound reverence to the King, led him to the Prince.

When evening was come, the Prince gave a supper in his pavilion to the King of France, and to the princes and barons who had been taken along with him. The Prince himself served the King's table, and would not sit down at it, though they urged him to do so. "I am unworthy of such an honour," he said, "nor does it become me to sit at the table of so great a king, or so valiant a man as he has shown himself to be this day." Further he said, "Do not make a poor meal because God has not granted you your wish to-day ; my father will show you, I know, all honour, and will arrange your ransom reasonably. I think, too, that you may be thankful that this day has not ended as you wished ; for you have had

occasion to surpass all the bravest knights on your side. And this I say, not to flatter you, but because it is the judgment of all on our side that have seen you." At the end of this speech there were murmurs of praise from every one, and the French said that the Prince had spoken nobly and truly, and that if God should grant him life, he would be one of the most gallant princes in Christendom.

King John was taken to England, the Prince giving one hundred thousand florins to be distributed among the barons of Gascony, who believed themselves to have a share in the prisoner. He rode through London in great state, and was lodged in the Savoy Palace, and afterwards in various places, his abode being frequently changed for fear of an escape. In 1360 he returned to France, it having been agreed that a ransom of 3,000,000 crowns should be paid for him; the value of this in English money being £1,125,000. Other conditions were made. The King found that he could not fulfil these, and he returned to England, where he died a few months afterwards. The Black Prince, who was twenty-six years old when he won Poitiers, died in 1376, a short time before his father.

BOOK II.

FROM RICHARD II. TO CHARLES I.

CHAPTER I.

THE STORY OF WAT TYLER.

IN the year 1381 there broke out the most terrible rebellion of the people against their rulers that has ever happened in England. There were many things to make them discontented. A great number of men had perished, and great sums of money had been spent, in the French wars, and all to very little or no good. Then the Parliament had passed laws by which they tried to keep the labourers, both in the country and the towns, from earning their proper wages. The fact was that a dreadful plague, which men called the *Black Death*, had passed through the country,¹ and swept off as much as half the population. Naturally, when there were fewer men to do the work, these fewer would be better paid for doing it. But this did not please their employers; and the employers persuaded the Parliament, where the poor had no one to speak for them, to pass a law by which wages should be kept low. By these it was for-

¹ It came in 1348, and again in 1361 and 1369.

bidden for any labourer to ask and for any master to pay higher wages than had been paid before the year of the Black Death.¹ Often, too, the landlords tried to make the labourers—"villeins" as they were called—give so many days' work, instead of the payment in money which they had for many years been accustomed to make. Then a very hateful tax, called the poll-tax, was laid upon the people. The word "poll" means head, and every one above a certain age was bound to pay it. True, it was provided that the rich should pay more than the poor; the Duke of Lancaster, who was the King's uncle, and the archbishops had to pay 10 marks (£6 13s. 4d.) each, while a labouring man had to pay a groat (4d.). But, as a matter of fact, rich and powerful people often paid less than their due, while the poor could not escape.

It was in the month of June, 1381, that the trouble began, and began in several places almost at the same time. An officer was sent down from London into Essex to inquire why the tax had not been properly collected in that county. At the first place he came to the people refused to answer his ques-

¹ These "Statutes of Labourers," as they were called, were first passed in 1349, and were renewed several times afterwards. They did not do what they were wanted to do, but they caused angry feelings between masters and men.

tions. Soon after one of the principal judges came to try them for their disobedience : they attacked him and his people ; the judge escaped, but some of his clerks were killed. In a few days all Essex had rebelled, their leader being a priest who called himself Jack Straw.

At the very same time that these things happened there was a rising in Kent. It began at Dartford, where a tax-collector was killed by a tile-maker, because he had behaved badly to one of the man's children. It spread to Gravesend, where one of the townspeople had been claimed as a bondsman by a neighbouring squire, and thrown into prison till he should pay £ 300 for his freedom. At Maidstone the rebels found a leader, Walter the tile-maker, commonly called Wat Tyler. There were as many as seven men who followed this occupation of making tiles that were among the leaders of the rebellion. Wat Tyler was joined by a well-known priest, John Ball by name, who had already been punished more than once for speaking against the Pope, the bishops, and the clergy. At Canterbury the mayor and aldermen were compelled to swear that they would support the cause of the people. The whole multitude—according to some accounts there were as many as 100,000 of them—marched towards London. When they came to Blackheath, John Ball is said to have

preached a sermon to them, taking for his text the two verses—

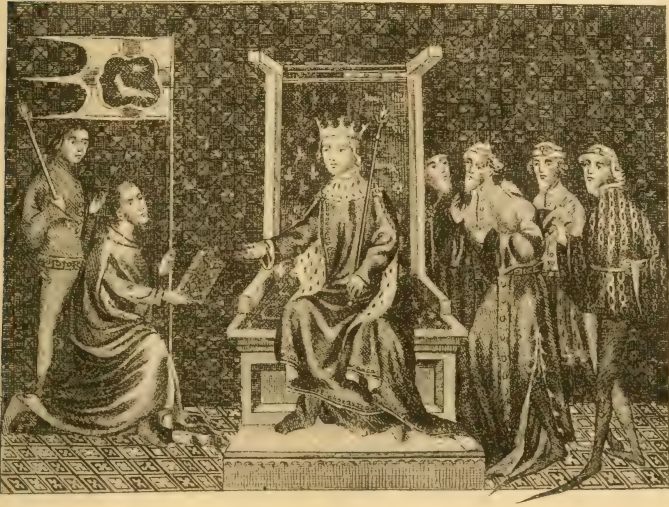
“When Adam delved and Evé span,
Who was then the gentleman?”

Meanwhile the country-folk from Essex had posted themselves at Mile End, which is on the east side of London, and those from Hertfordshire at Highbury, which is on the north. But it was not these, as we shall see, but the men from Kent that did the most mischief.

What they first did was to send a message to the King by a certain knight whom they had compelled to come with them. The knight was to tell the King that England had been very badly governed for many years by the nobles and bishops, and that the people desired, for his sake and their own, to have these things set right. They wished, therefore, that he should see them and hear what they had got to say. The knight took this message, not very willingly, and the King sent him back with this answer, that if they would send their leaders the next day down to the river, he would talk with them.

The next day the King was rowed in his barge down the river as far as Rotherhithe (about three miles from Blackheath). The rebels had not been satisfied to send their leaders only; as many as

10,000 men had crowded down to the river-side, and these raised such an uproar when they saw the King's barge, that the nobles who were with him were frightened, and advised him not to land. The barge was rowed up and down, and the King tried to speak



KING RICHARD THE SECOND.

from it ; the people, however, would not listen unless he landed, and this the nobles would not allow him to do.

When the multitude at Blackheath heard that nothing had been done, they at once marched to London, doing much damage as they went. They

were especially enraged against lawyers, and foreigners, such as were the Flemings, merchants and workmen from Flanders, many of whom had lately come over to this country. They thought that the lawyers made a profit out of their troubles, and that the Flemings took trade and work that properly belonged to Englishmen. The gates of London were not shut against them ; in fact, there were thousands of people in the city who wished them well, and the authorities did not dare to refuse them admittance.

Perhaps the most unpopular man in the kingdom at this time was John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, uncle to the King. A large body of the rebels, as soon as they got into the city, plundered and set on fire the Duke's palace, which was near the river, in a place then and still called the Savoy. The house and church belonging to the Knights Hospitallers of Rhodes were also burnt ; the people probably disliked them as being foreigners. Some houses belonging to Lombard money-lenders were broken open. We are also told that Wat Tyler murdered a citizen whose servant he had once been in France, and by whom he had been beaten. The story does not look like truth, for how should a tile-maker have been a citizen's servant in France ?

That night the main body of the rebels remained in St. Catherine's Square opposite the Tower. It

was in the Tower that the King, his mother, the Black Prince's widow, and many of his chief counsellors were living.

The next day the King went to talk with the people who had come up from the eastern counties, and who had assembled, as has been said, at a place called Mile End. He made them promises to set right the things of which they complained, and so satisfied them. He even put these promises into writing. As many as thirty scribes were busy all night, it is said, with this work. In the morning the deeds were handed over to the people, and they went away to their homes, thinking that they had obtained all that they wanted.

Meanwhile, much mischief had been done at the Tower. We do not know whether the rebels were permitted to enter this place, or broke into it by force. We can see that the King and his advisers did everything they could to please Wat Tyler and his followers, of whom they were greatly afraid, and they may have thought it a good plan to seem to trust them. According to one account, the rebel leaders made their way through the gate as the King's party was coming out to go to Mile End. However this may be, they got in somehow, and murdered four persons, the chief of whom was Simon of Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury. After this they left St. Catherine's Square, and encamped in another large open space, where

markets were held, known as Smithfield, and still called by that name.

The next morning the King rode into London from Westminster, for he had been at service in the Abbey. It is not clear whether he intended to speak to the rebels, or, seeing a great gathering of them as he rode by Smithfield, suddenly made up his mind to do so. He had done so well with the people at Mile End that he may well have hoped to pacify Wat Tyler and his followers. The story of what followed is thus told by a chronicler who lived at the time.¹

“When Wat Tyler saw the King, he said to his men, ‘Here is the King; I will go and speak with him; do not move from your place till I give you this sign,’ and he moved his hand to show what he meant. ‘Then step forward and kill every one that is with the King, but save him alive, for he is young, and we can do what we please with him. We will carry him about England, and be masters of the whole land.’ Then he spurred his horse to where the King was coming so near that his horse’s head touched the

¹ Froissart, a French priest, was born in 1337. He lived in England for some time about the year 1361, and came again to this country in 1395, *i. e.* fourteen years after the time of which I am now writing. He stayed here for three months, and during that time saw much of the King, and may very well have heard from him the story of these events.

crupper of the King's saddle. 'King,' said he, 'dost thou see all these people?'

"'Yes,' answered the King, 'I see them. Why dost thou ask?'

"'Because they are all under my command, and have sworn to do whatsoever I shall bid them.'

"'Well,' said the King, 'I do not blame them.'

"'But dost thou think that all these men, and as many more as there are in this city under my command, ought to go away without having your promise in writing to take with them? Not so; but we will take the writings with us.'

"'Nay, it has not been so ordered. Tell your companions to go to their homes, and the writings shall be given out village by village and town by town.'

"When the King had thus spoken, Wat Tyler saw one of the King's squires against whom he had a grudge. The man was carrying the King's sword. He said to him, 'Give me thy dagger.'

"'Why should I give it thee?' said the squire. But the King said, 'Give it to him,' and this the squire did, much against his will.

"Wat Tyler said, 'Give me thy sword.'

"'I will not,' the squire answered, 'for it is the King's sword, and thou art not worthy to carry it. And had thou and I been alone thou hadst not dared say such words, not for a heap of gold as high as this church.'

For they were near to the church of St. Bartholomew, which still stands in Smithfield. When the Mayor of London, William Walworth by name, heard this, he rode forward, having twelve others with him, all wearing armour under their clothes. 'How darest thou,' he said, 'so behave and say such words in the presence of the King?' By this time, too, the King had grown angry, and said to the Mayor, 'Lay hands on him.'

"Meanwhile Wat Tyler said to the Mayor, 'What concern hast thou with my words? What dost thou mean?'

" 'I mean this,' said the Mayor, 'that it does not become such a rascal as thou art to say such words in the presence of my lord the King. Verily, if I die for it, thou shalt suffer for thy insolence.' With this he drew a sword that he had, and struck Tyler such a blow as brought him down from his horse. When he was on the ground the King's people closed round him, so that his followers could not see what was done, and one of the squires killed him.

"When the rebels saw that their leader was dead, they cried out, 'They have killed our captain; let us slay them all.' And they came on, each man having his bow bent before him.

"The King, seeing this, bade his attendants stay where they were, and rode forward alone. 'Gentle-

men,' he said, 'what are you about? You shall have none other captain but me. I am your king.' When they heard these words, such as were inclined to peace slunk away, but the others kept their ground, and seemed ready for mischief.

"By this time the alarm had spread in the city that the King was in danger, and a great number of the citizens came out to his help. Some of the King's counsellors were for falling upon the rebels, but the King would not suffer it. 'Nay,' said he, 'but go and ask them for their banners.' For each company had one of the King's banners. These they gave up. Then it was commanded that any man that had a written promise from the King should give it up under pain of death. This they did also, and after this they were suffered to depart."

The other leaders were seized and executed, and many of those who had joined in the rebellion were put to death. None of the King's promises were kept, and the wrongs complained of were not set right. Still in the end these poor men did not suffer in vain. Wat Tyler's rebellion was a step towards English freedom.

CHAPTER II.

HOTOSPUR AND GLENDOWER.

IT would have been well for King Richard if he had always behaved as well as he did on the day when he met Wat Tyler and his men in Smithfield. He was then but sixteen years of age, but unhappily he did not grow wiser as he grew older. At one time he allowed himself to be led by bad advisers; at another he seemed determined to have his own way, and was very tyrannical and unjust. One of his unrighteous acts was a chief cause of his fate. He had banished his cousin, Henry, Duke of Hereford, but had promised him that when Henry's father, John of Gaunt, should die, he should have his estates. This promise he did not keep. John of Gaunt died in 1399, and the King at once seized all his property. Henry came to England to claim his inheritance; many of the great nobles joined him; and Richard when he came back from Ireland, whither he had gone

a few months before, found that he was left alone. He surrendered himself to Henry, who declared that he had come to help him to govern the kingdom better. This was a pretence. Richard was thrown into the Tower, and consented to give up the Crown. Henry read the consent to Parliament and claimed the Crown for himself, and Parliament gave its assent.

The new King had a very unquiet reign. The first rebellion against him broke out in Wales. Rather more than a hundred years before this time an English King, Edward I.,¹ had conquered this country. The people had never been quite content, and now they saw a chance of getting their freedom again. Their leader was a certain Owen Glendower, who claimed to be descended from the last Prince of Wales, Llewellyn by name, the one who had tried in vain to resist the English conquest. Glendower had been one of King Richard's squires, and had been ill-treated when his master lost his throne. A neighbour, Lord Grey of Ruthyn, had been allowed to take possession of some of his estates. When he tried to get justice done to him, it was refused. Then he rebelled, and soon gathered a number of followers. Wales is a land of mountains, which Glendower and his men

¹ See p. 202.

knew very well, and in which it was not easy for the English to find them. To the very end of his reign King Henry found this Welsh chief a

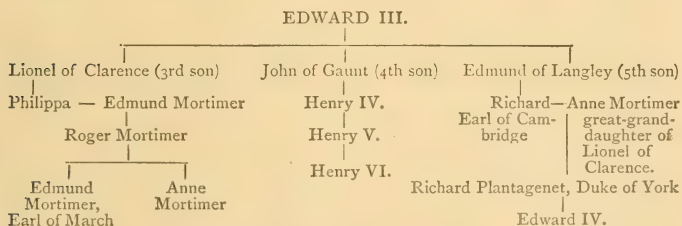


THE BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY.

very troublesome enemy. Twice did he invade Wales with a large army, and twice he was obliged to retreat. He made a third attempt, he and his son Prince Henry (afterwards Henry V.) and the Earl

of Arundel attacking the country at different points. This time the Welsh rivers were so flooded by heavy rains that the English armies could not advance. Owen had the reputation of being a magician, and his followers believed that he had caused the floods by his arts. This made him more powerful than ever.

In one of his battles he had taken prisoner one Edmund Mortimer, uncle to the young Earl of March, who, as will be seen from the genealogy, had a better claim to the Crown than Henry. As this is an important thing toward understanding the history of England for the next sixty years, you should look carefully at this table of the descendants of King Edward III.



King Henry did not look with any favour on his family, and he would not allow Edmund Mortimer's relatives to ransom him. But by doing this he made enemies of another very powerful family, the Percies, Earls of Northumberland, for Henry Percy, eldest son of the Earl, known as Hotspur on account of his

impetuous courage, had married Edmund Mortimer's sister. The Percies had for some time disliked the King. They had had much to do with putting him on the throne, and though he had rewarded them with grants of land and various honours, they thought that he had not done enough. So a great conspiracy was formed against King Henry. Owen Glendower released his prisoner Mortimer, and gave him his sister to wife, while Henry Percy made friends with a powerful Scotch noble, the Earl of Douglas. This Earl of Douglas had been taken prisoner by Henry Percy the year before at the Battle of Homildon Hill. He was now released without ransom, and joined the Percies with a large number of Scottish soldiers. Owen Glendower, on his part, promised to bring 12,000 Welshmen to help his friends. It was agreed that the Northumbrians and the Scotchmen should march southwards, and join Owen and his Welsh.

If this plan had been carried out it is quite possible that the rebellion might have succeeded. And indeed Henry was in great danger. He did not know what the Percies were thinking of doing. He heard indeed that Glendower and his Welshmen were about to invade Gloucestershire, and he sent letters to the lieutenant of that and of other counties on the Welsh border, telling them to muster their men and send them to join the Prince of Wales. He also knew that the

Scotch were intending to attack England, and he sent instructions to the Percies themselves to resist them. This he did on June 16. A few days later he marched northwards himself, still knowing nothing about the Percies having rebelled. About July 12 he learnt the truth, and hurried back. And he was just in time. On July 18 he came up with Hotspur and his Scottish allies, before Glendower had been able to join them. They were three miles from Shrewsbury, and so not far from the Welsh border. A fierce battle was fought, in which the rebels were defeated; Hotspur was killed, not, as Shakespeare describes, by the young Prince Henry, who was but a lad of fifteen, but by a chance arrow, as he was leading his men. The Earl of Douglas was taken prisoner. Prince Henry was in the battle, and was wounded by an arrow in the forehead.

We do not know what became of Glendower. He was certainly never conquered. In 1404, two years, that is, after the battle of Shrewsbury, we hear of his sending the Bishop of St. Asaph to make a treaty for him with the King of France, and nine years later still, Henry V., who was then about to start on the expedition which I shall describe in my next chapter, offered to pardon him if he would submit. He never did submit; very likely, as we hear no more about him, he died about this time.

CHAPTER III.

AGINCOURT.

I HAVE already told¹ how Edward III. claimed to be King of France, and how he won great victories by sea and land in seeking to make good this claim. But the whole country he could never conquer. Afterwards all that the English had won was lost again. For King Edward grew weak and foolish in his old age, and the Black Prince died before his father after long sickness. When Richard, the Black Prince's son, became king, he was but a boy, and the great English nobles were too much taken up with quarrels to care much for other things; nor did Richard do any better when he took the power into his own hands. The end of it was, that when Richard died only the town of Calais was left to the English. King Henry IV. was too busy keeping himself upon his throne, and putting down the nobles who rebelled against him, to have any time for conquest abroad. But Henry V. felt himself able to do what his father

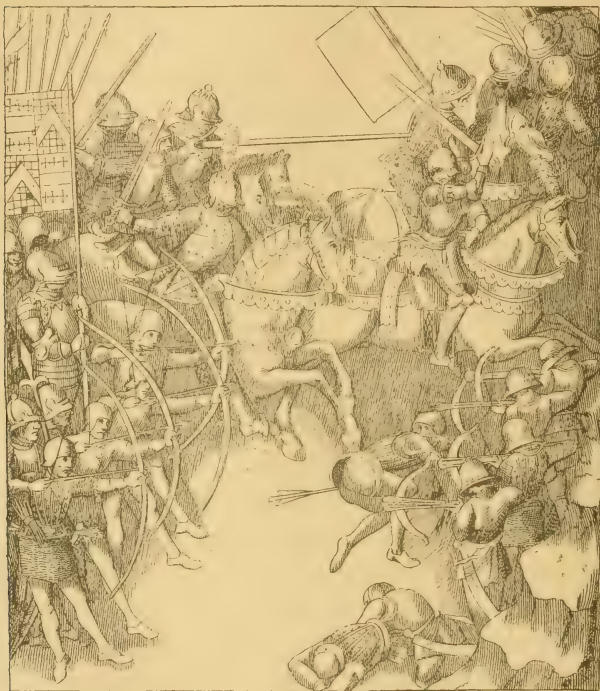
¹ Book I. chs. 28—31.

could not. First he claimed that certain provinces of France should be given up to him, and that he should have for his wife the daughter of the French king, the Princess Katharine, with a dowry of two million crowns. Something the French were willing to give, two or three provinces, but not all that Henry asked, and the Princess, but not with so much money. For a while ambassadors went to and fro, but they could come to no agreement,¹ and on August 11, 1415, King Henry set sail from Southampton. He had about 30,000 men, who were carried in more than 1500 vessels.

He landed at Harfleur, and spent more than a month in besieging that place. When at last he took the town, he found that his army was much weakened. Some soldiers had been killed ; many had died of disease, for the season was very wet and unhealthy. The safest and easiest thing for him to do was to sail back at once. This he did not like to do. It would disgrace him, he thought, to have taken so much trouble for the sake of a single town, even though Harfleur was an important place, from which French ships used to come out to plunder the English coast. So he made up his mind to march across

¹ The King of France was Charles VI., grandson of that King John who was taken prisoner at Poitiers. He was frequently mad during the latter years of his life.

Normandy to Calais. This was a sort of defiance to the French King. Having done this he could go



THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT.

back to England with more credit. So he sent back the sick and wounded to England, and leaving a garrison in Harfleur, began his march. He had

perhaps 2000 men-at-arms and 10,000 archers with him, and he had 150 miles to go through an enemy's country. About half the march he made without any one trying to hinder him; it was when he had to cross the river Somme that his real difficulties began. Sixty-nine years before his great-grandfather Edward III. had been in just the same position. He had to cross the same river, with the fords and bridges guarded, and an enemy's army much stronger than his own on the other side. King Edward had found a ford by bribing a Norman peasant;¹ King Henry was able to cross the river at a place which the people of St. Quentin, whose business it was to keep it, had left unguarded. Half his army had crossed before the enemy came in sight; even then they were not strong enough to attack him, and he made the passage without any loss. But he had had to go very much out of his way, and in fact was not much nearer Calais than when he started.² But though the French had a much stronger army, they fell back before him, and it was not till he was

¹ See vol. i. p. 216.

² If he could have crossed by the ford which King Edward found unguarded he would have saved several days' march. Measure the distance on the map from Harfleur to Calais, first by way of St. Quentin, and then by way of Abbeville (where King Edward crossed), and you will find the first nearly double the second.

within forty miles of his journey's end that they made a stand. On October 24 he reached a little village called Blangy. Crossing a stream at a place where a mill now stands, he marched up to a high table-land which lies above the valley, and there found the French army, so placed as to block the road to Calais. Their leaders had not taken the trouble to make their position as strong as they might have made it. There were two villages a little in front of their two wings¹; they let the English occupy them. There were woods near, in which they ought to have posted troops. They did not do so. All they did was to put their huge mass of soldiers—a hundred thousand men at the least—between the English and the place which King Henry was trying to reach. They seemed to think that it would be quite sufficient to stand still and let these few thousands of men who were scarcely a tenth part of their number, dash themselves against them. There were three lines of the French, one behind another. In the first were 20,000 men, armed with coats of mail and helmets. Bodies of cavalry stood on either side ready to charge when they were wanted. The second line was made up in much the same way; the third consisted chiefly of cavalry.

The English were drawn up in one line, with the

¹ The "wings" of an army are its right and left sides.

archers on either side, the men-at-arms in the middle, but with some archers among them. Each of these had a stake shod with iron which he had carried with him on his march. These were to be fixed into the ground to make a hedge when the cavalry should charge. There were archers also in the two villages which the French had not taken the trouble to occupy. The baggage was left some way behind with a few men to guard it.

King Henry rode along the line on a small grey horse, putting his men in order, and bidding them be of good courage. He wore over his armour a coat embroidered with the leopards of England and the lilies of France, worked in their proper colours. Round his helmet was a crown of gold. Every one was to know that he was the King, and the King, as he said, both of France and England. When he had passed from one end of the line to the other, he sent his horse away, and took his stand on foot in front of his army, with the royal standard waving over his head. His post was in the middle of the line. On the right the Duke of York¹ was in command; on the left Lord Camoys.

Which side was to move first? Had the French kept to their plan of standing still and letting the

¹ Son of Edmund of Langley, fifth son of Edward III., and so first cousin one degree removed of the King.

little English army dash itself in vain upon them, the battle might have had another end. Happily for us they did not, and it seems to have been King Henry's boldness and skill that made them move. By his command, Sir Thomas Erpyngham, one of the oldest knights in the army, gave the signal to charge by throwing his truncheon into the air. All the line advanced; and then the French, in their turn, began to move. It roused them to anger to see this little company of men, ragged and worn with marching, daring to attack them. Their huge, unwieldy host began to advance. Then the English halted. The archers set up their hedge of stakes, and so sheltered sent a shower of arrows into the midst of the enemy. For a time the English line was borne backward. But the archers went on shooting, and the men-at-arms fought with desperate valour. When the French horsemen tried to charge, they found themselves stopped by the hedge of stakes. Besides, it was only a few that could charge. The army was so crowded together that it could hardly move; only those in front could raise their hands to strike. And then the heavy ground was against them. It was now late in the autumn, and there had been much rain during the last two months. The English had suffered from it while they lay outside the walls of Harfleur, or marched backwards and forwards

along the banks of the Somme ; now it served them. The horsemen and heavy-armed foot-soldiers could not move for the mire. And all the while the terrible shower of arrows went on falling among them and striking them down. The French have always been better at charging than at standing still, and they began to lose courage, to waver, to fall back.

Yet there was at least one brave effort to change the fortune of the day. The Duke d'Alençon gathered round him a number of knights and men-at-arms, and made for the place where King Henry was fighting in front of his army. If he could be killed, thought the Duke, the battle might yet be won. The Duke struck the King's brother, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, to the ground with a dangerous wound, and dealt the King himself a great blow which dented his helmet, and brought him to his knees. But he could do no more. He was overpowered and slain. In vain did the King try to save his life.

The first line of the French was now broken ; the second seems to have fled almost without resistance. Some brave nobles and knights did, indeed, charge the English, but they could do nothing ; every man among them was either killed or made prisoner.

And now there happened a dreadful thing, for which the King has often been blamed. He was

told that the French had attacked the rear of his army, that they were setting the prisoners free (for many prisoners had been taken by this time), had plundered the baggage, and were now about to charge him from behind. He gave orders to kill all the prisoners that had not been sent to the rear. When the nobles and knights refused to obey, for they hoped to get ransom for those whom they had taken, and so pay themselves back for the money which they had spent, the King sent a squire with a number of archers to execute his orders. Many had been killed, when it was found out that the news was a false alarm. A knight who lived in the neighbourhood had indeed gone with a number of men to the rear of the English army and plundered the baggage.¹ But there was no such danger as Henry had feared. And yet there might have been. Even then the French were in numbers far stronger than he was. If they had taken courage, and had found a brave and skilful man to lead them, they might still have destroyed him and his little army. And the prisoners, if set free, would of course have been very dangerous.

The battle over, the King rode over the field of battle. "To whom does the victory belong?" he

¹ He got hold of a number of the King's jewels, and even of his crown.

said to the chief of the French heralds. "To you, sire," the man answered. Turning round, Henry saw the turrets of a castle, and asked its name. "The Castle of Agincourt," was the answer. "Since it is fitting," he said, "that all battles should bear the name of the fortress near to which they have been fought, let this field bear for ever the name of Agincourt."

The French lost 10,000 men in this great battle, and of these more than 8000 were nobles and knights. Some of the very first men in France were among them. On the English side the Duke of York was killed, and Michael de la Pole, the young Earl of Suffolk. How many more fell we do not know. A French chronicler says 1500, an English 3300. The English took 1500 prisoners, two royal princes among them.

The King went back to England. Afterwards he returned to France with another and yet stronger army. After much fighting peace was made. It was agreed that Henry should marry the Princess Katharine, and should be King of France after the death of Charles

CHAPTER IV.

THE ENGLISH IN FRANCE.

ON October 22, 1422, Charles VI. of France died. At his funeral the French herald cried aloud, first, "May God have mercy on the soul of the late most powerful and excellent Charles VI. King of France!" and then, "May God grant long life to Henry, by the Grace of God King of France and England!" for indeed the little child, Henry of Windsor as he was called, then not a year old, was by the treaty of Troyes King of France and England. His uncle, John, Duke of Bedford, had been made regent by Henry on his death-bed, and for a time all seemed to go well. Charles, son of the late King, claimed, it is true, the crown of France, and was supported by many of the nobles, but the greater part of the country was content, it seemed, to submit to the English. The Duke of Bedford was an excellent soldier and a good governor. He was on good terms too with the two powerful princes, the Dukes of Brittany and Burgundy. A sister of the

latter became his wife. But it was a state of things in which trouble was sure to arise before very long. After all, the English had no real right to be in France, and though some powerful persons in that country, for reasons of their own, supported them, their power had no strong foundation. Then there were perpetual quarrels at home among the nobles who ruled in the young King's name. The Duke of Gloucester, another uncle of the young King, and Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, who was also related to him, were the leaders of two hostile parties in the Council, and their quarrels did much harm both at home and abroad. But the chief cause of the overthrow of the English kingdom in France was of a very different kind. This cause I shall now describe.

At the little village of Domremi, in the province of Champagne, there was a peasant family of the name of Darc. One of the daughters, Jeanne by name (commonly spelt Joan), was a very pious and earnest girl, who had been greatly moved by the sad stories which she had heard of the troubles of her country, divided as it was by parties among its own people, and oppressed by a foreign ruler. She thought much about these things, as she spent day after day alone in the fields near her native village, keeping her father's sheep. Before long she seemed

to herself to see the figures of angels in the sky and to hear voices which told her that she had a great work to do for France. As time went on these visions seemed to become clearer and clearer. She saw Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine, and heard the voice of the Archangel Michael. She was to deliver the young King from his enemies, and bring him to be crowned where his fathers before him had been crowned, in the Cathedral of Rheims. Obeying, as she thought, these commands, she went to the officer in command of a neighbouring garrison and told him her errand. Of course he was disposed to treat her as a mad-woman or a cheat. But by this time she had become famous in the country round. No one doubted her goodness and piety. Many were disposed to believe that she was really chosen by Heaven to do a great work for France. A priest who was sent to question her was much moved by her earnestness, and declared that she was not a witch—people in those days were terribly afraid of witches. At last she got her way, so far at least as to be taken to King Charles. Mounted on a white horse, and dressed like a man, for this, she said, was one of the things which the voices from heaven commanded, with four squires attending her, she rode to Chinon, where the King then was. The King and his Councillors were not disposed to believe

in her. But at last her zeal and faith prevailed, not a little, we may suppose, because the King's affairs were in a very bad way.

It was now the early spring of 1429, and Orleans, the most important place which yet remained to King Charles, had been besieged since October 12 in the year before by the English and Burgundians. In February 1429 Sir John Falstaff, who was bringing provisions to the besieging army, had won a victory over an army of French and Scots at a battle called the Battle of the Herrings. If Orleans should fall, it was plain that for some time to come at least King Charles would have little hope of success. This was just what the Maid declared she could prevent, and the King resolved to try her. A force of 7000 men was raised and sent to relieve the town. Joan, splendidly armed, carrying a sacred banner, and surrounded by a troop of picked horsemen, went with the army. They took a supply of provisions for the town, which was carried down the Loire in boats, the army marching along the bank to protect them. The English tried to capture the boats but failed; both troops and provisions got safely into Orleans, and Joan was received with the greatest joy by the townspeople. Thenceforward she was commonly called The Maid of Orleans.

The very next day, Joan, sure that the besiegers

were as much disheartened by what had happened as the townspeople were encouraged, prevailed upon the officers in command to attack the English works. The first place assaulted was a tower called St. Loup, garrisoned by three hundred English. It was taken. The next day another fort fell. A few days afterwards the strongest position of the besiegers, the Castle of Tournelles, was attacked. On this occasion the Maid was wounded in the neck by an arrow, and fell to the ground. But she revived when the arrow had been drawn out, and again joined the men of Orleans in the assault. The castle was captured, and most of the garrison either slain or taken prisoners. The spirit of the English was now quite broken down. On May 8, after burning what was left of their works, they gave up the siege, and Orleans was safe. In the course of little more than a week this wonderful girl had turned the tide of war.

And now, for some time, victory seemed to follow her wherever she went. Fort after fort, town after town, fell into the hands of the French. At Patay they ventured on a fight in the open field, a thing which they had hardly ventured to do since the fatal day of Agincourt, and gained a great victory. This was on June 18. About three weeks afterwards, on Sunday, July 8, Charles was crowned at Rheims

The maid stood by his side, holding her sacred banner in her hands.



ENGLISH SOLDIERS FIGHTING IN FRANCE.

And now, feeling that her work was done, she would gladly have returned to her home. The voices, she said, had bidden her rouse the King

from his despair, and see him crowned. This she had accomplished, and she asked leave to depart. "What will you do?" the King is said to have asked. "Feed my father's sheep as I was wont to do," was her answer. But King Charles thought too much of the help which she gave him to let her go, and she stayed, though much against her will.

And now her good fortune seemed in a way to leave her. King Charles made an attack on Paris, which the English still held. The Maid was among the foremost in an assault that was made on September 12 on one of the suburbs of the city. She scaled the wall, and when thrown back into the ditch, rose again and waved her banner to encourage the assailants. But nothing could be done, and when it was found that her special sword¹ was broken, men began to whisper that the favour of Heaven had been withdrawn. Again she entreated the King to allow her to depart, and again he refused.

It was near the end of May in the following year (1430) that she fought her last battle. The Duke of Burgundy was besieging Compiègne, and the Maid marched with a considerable force to relieve the

¹ This was a sword with five crosses upon it. It had been laid up near one of the altars of a church, at some former time, and had been forgotten. Joan described it exactly, and also the place where it had been put. It was given to her, and she used it ever afterwards.

town. She made her way through the lines of the besiegers into the town. The next day she headed a sally against the enemy, and took one of their posts. Then her men were out-numbered and compelled to retreat. Joan, staying behind while she tried to rally them, was overtaken by a Burgundian archer, and pulled from her horse. "The English were rejoiced," says the chronicler Monstrelet, "and more pleased than if they had taken five hundred other combatants, for they feared no other leader or captain so much as they had hitherto feared the Maid." When shortly after the Duke of Burgundy himself came to inspect his army at Compiègne, he went to see his prisoner at the lodgings where she was kept. "He spoke some words to her," says Monstrelet, "but what they were I do not now recollect, although I was present." One cannot help being sorry that Monstrelet does not tell us more about this wonderful young woman. But he does not seem to have been very much interested in her.

What remains to say about her is very sad indeed. The Duke of Burgundy gave her up to the Bishop of Beauvais, who tried her as a heretic and a witch. As she declared that she was bound to obey the heavenly voices which she had heard, her judges found her guilty of heresy, and condemned her to

death. She was persuaded to acknowledge that she had been wrong, and that she was bound to obey the Church rather than the voices. Having signed this confession—she could not write, but “made her mark”—her punishment was changed from death to imprisonment for life. But her enemies were not satisfied. The dress of a soldier was left in her cell; she put it on, and her gaolers, who had been watching her, found her in it. This was taken as a fresh offence; she was again condemned to death, and burnt on May 30, 1431, in the market-place of Rouen. One is glad to think that this cruel and wicked act was not done by the English. King Charles, who owed his throne to her, did not take the least trouble to save her life.

Six months afterwards Henry VI. was crowned King of France in Paris. But his cause never prospered, and when the Duke of Bedford died, as he did about four years afterwards, it became quite hopeless. The war went on indeed, and sometimes one side got the better and sometimes the other. At last, in 1451, nothing was left of all the English possessions in France but the town of Calais. Things in fact were exactly as they had been thirty-six years before, when Henry V. began his French war. All the blood and treasure that had been spent had been spent in vain.

CHAPTER V.

JACK CADE.

THE rebellion of Wat Tyler about which I wrote in the first chapter of this book happened just thirty-five years after the great battle of Poitiers, and the rebellion of Jack Cade, about which I am going to write in this, exactly the same time after Agincourt. And this was not a mere chance. Both Poitiers and Agincourt were glorious victories, but it might have been better for England if they had never been won, for they made the nation hope to do what never could be done, that is, conquer France. The English went on spending lives and money without end, and all for nothing. Men went away from every English village to the French wars, and never came back again; the taxes grew heavier and heavier; and the nobles and knights asked more and more from their tenants. Sometimes money was wanted when they had to fit themselves out for a campaign with their squires and their men-at-arms, sometimes to raise a ransom if they happened to be taken prisoners. All

these things and others like them caused a great deal of trouble, as indeed was sure to be the case when the rulers of the country were more anxious to get hold of what belonged to other people than to do their best with what was their own. The result was great discontent, which broke out now and then into open rebellion when there was some special cause, such as a bad harvest or a new tax.

In the summer of 1450 the three counties that lie in the south-eastern corner of England, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex, rebelled, under the leadership of a certain Jack Cade, who called himself Captain of Kent. They complained that the King had bad advisers about him, that the English possessions in France had been lost by treachery, and that the taxes were unbearably heavy. Who Jack Cade himself was is not known for certain. He gave out that he belonged to the noble family of Mortimer. It should be observed that the leaders of Wat Tyler's rebellion did not pretend to be anything but workmen, whereas the chief of this pretended that he was a man of high birth. According to some accounts he was an Irishman, who had fought in France against the English, but had afterwards come over to this country. He led his men to Blackheath, where they encamped. It is said that there was a great multitude of them, and that they were well disciplined and well armed. The

King or rather his ministers, for Henry himself had very little spirit, and was for the best part led by others, raised an army of 15,000 men and marched against the rebels. Cade did not feel himself able



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to meet so strong a force, and retreated southward. The King was preparing to pursue him, but his wife, Margaret of Anjou, is said to have been afraid that he might meet with some injury, and to have prevailed upon him to stay behind himself, and send two

of his generals, Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother William, to attack them. Cade had been afraid to resist the King. Perhaps he knew that his followers would not back him up in doing so. But it was a different thing when he had to do with a couple of knights. At Sevenoaks he turned upon his pursuers and defeated them, killing both their leaders. After winning this victory he marched northward again, and encamped once more on Blackheath. And now the city of London came over to him. The Common Council voted that the gates of the town should be opened to him, and he marched his troops across London Bridge, and took possession. This he did by striking his sword on "London Stone"¹ and crying out at the same time, "Now is Mortimer Lord of London."

The King, still under the influence of his wife, who did not behave with anything like the courage that she afterwards showed, had fled to Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire, and it seemed as if the rebellion were likely to succeed. For a time Cade was able to keep his men in good order. They remained in the city during the day, but without plundering the property of the citizens or doing any injury to man, woman, or child. Every night their leader took them across the

¹ "London Stone" may still be seen in the wall of St. Swithin's Church in Cannon Street.

bridge to Southwark, which is on the other side of the river. But this happy state of things did not last very long. Cade seized the Treasurer, Lord Saye and Sele, who had made himself very unpopular, and brought him before the Lord Mayor. The Lord Mayor condemned him, and he was executed in Cheapside.¹ Another victim was Lord Saye and Sele's son-in-law, Crowmer, who was Sheriff of Kent. The citizens of London did not approve of these proceedings, and putting themselves under the command of one Matthew Gough, who had the reputation of being a skilful soldier, tried to prevent Cade and his followers from coming over the bridge from Southwark into London. A fierce fight took place. The Londoners, who had posted themselves at the southern end of the bridge, were driven back to the middle, where there was a drawbridge. Matthew Gough was killed in the battle. But though the rebels had the best of the fighting, Cade did not feel strong enough to enter London again, and remained on the south side of the river.

And now the King's counsellors thought that they might be disposed to listen to offers of peace. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Win-

¹ Then the great market of London. "Cheap" means market. So we have a "chapman," a man who sells; and such names of towns as Chipping Norton, Chipping Barnet, Chipping Camden, etc.

chester were sent to treat with them. They found Cade dressed in a splendid suit of gilded armour which had belonged to Sir Humphrey Stafford. The Archbishop afterwards spoke of him as having been "sober in talk and wise in reasoning, though arrogant in heart and stiff in opinion." The Archbishop promised that the things complained of should be set right, and that no man should be punished for having taken part in the rebellion. On hearing this Cade's followers dispersed to their homes. They had got, they thought, what they wanted, and now the sooner they went back to their own business the better. But Cade was not satisfied. Perhaps he was afraid that, having been the leader of the whole affair, he would be excepted from the pardon. Perhaps, having had a taste of power, he was not willing to give it up. As his own people had left him, he is said to have provided himself with a new force by breaking open the gaols and setting free the prisoners. But this was a kind of army which did not hold together very long. With some of his followers Cade made his way to Rochester, whither he sent the plunder which he had collected. About this plunder they quarrelled, and Cade, leaving his companions, tried to make his escape alone. By this time a price of £1000 had been set upon his head. At Heathfield, a village in the Weald of Sussex, he was overtaken by Alexander Iden, who

had been made Sheriff of Kent, and mortally wounded. Iden would have taken him to London, but he died on the way.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TWO ROSES.

THE rebellion of Jack Cade lasted but a few weeks only; the Civil War, which is commonly called the "War of the Roses," went on, with times of peace in between, for thirty years and more. The first battle was fought at St. Albans on May 22, 1455, the last at Bosworth Field on August 22, 1485.

The first and most easily described cause of this war was the claim of an elder branch of the royal family of England as against a younger. If you will look back to p. 15 of this volume, you will see how Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, was descended from Lionel of Clarence, *third* son of Edward III. It will be enough to say that the Duke of York, son of this Edmund Mortimer's sister Anne, claimed the throne as having a better right to it than Henry VI., who, as the same table shows, was descended from Edward III.'s *fourth* son, John of Gaunt.

But this family claim after all did not go for very much. Possibly it might never have been heard of, or would, at least, have come to nothing, if Henry V. had lived, or had left behind him a wiser and more capable son than Henry VI. But things were so badly managed by Henry and his advisers that the nation, or at least a great part of it, looked for a change. Then the Lollards or followers of Wiclif, who had been favoured by John of Gaunt, were persecuted by his descendants, and naturally turned to another branch of the family, which might, they hoped, treat them better. Another cause of the war was that the nobles, not having any longer the French to fight with, began to fight against each other. Lastly, the towns, which were growing richer and stronger, took up the side of the Duke of York, as being one who would try to make certain reforms which were much wanted, and generally to take their part against the nobles and bishops.

The first battle took place, as has been said, at St. Albans, in 1455.¹ The Duke of York had not then got as far as claiming the crown. He only demanded that the King should dismiss a very weak and worthless adviser that he had, Edmund Beaufort,

¹ There were two battles at St. Albans. The second happened not quite six years afterward (Feb. 17, 1461).

Duke of Somerset.¹ In order to see that this was done, he, in company with some other nobles, of



HENRY VI. AND MARGARET.

whom the Earl of Warwick was one, marched towards London. The King's troops came out to meet him,

¹ Edmund Beaufort was a cousin of the King's, being a grandson of John of Gaunt.

and the two armies met in the town of St. Albans. The King's soldiers got into the town first, and made barricades across the streets. These they held for a time, and so kept the Duke of York's men in check, but the Earl of Warwick got in by another way, and took them in the rear. After a short struggle they fled. The battle lasted little more than an hour, and not many were killed on either side, but among these was the Duke of Somerset.¹

The Duke of York now became the most powerful man in the kingdom, being made "Protector of the Realm." But Queen Margaret, who had far more to do with the government of the country than her husband, never liked him, and did not rest till she had deprived him of his office. For the time the

¹ It was the Duke of Somerset and the Earl of Warwick who, according to the common story, chose the white and the red roses as badges of their two parties. Shakespeare (1 *Henry VI.*, Act II. sc. iv.) makes the plucker of the White Rose to be Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York,

(Scene—The Temple Gardens.)

“Plan. Let him that is a true-born gentleman,
And stands upon the honour of his birth,
If he suppose that I have pleaded truth,
From off this brier pluck a white rose with me.

Som. Let him that is no coward, nor no flatterer,
But dare maintain the party of the truth,
Pluck a red rose from off this thorn with me.”

Duke of York made no resistance, but retired to his castle in the north. The next thing was that the Archbishop of Canterbury, with others who were anxious to keep the peace, endeavoured to reconcile the two parties. For a time they succeeded; the chiefs went to St. Paul's Cathedral in London, walking arm-in-arm, while the Duke of York himself gave his hand to the Queen. But the peace did not last very long. The Earl of Warwick was very nearly killed by a mob in a London street, and fled to Calais, of which he was governor. From that time he began to do his best to take the crown from Henry and give it to the Duke of York.

In 1459 the war began again. First the White Rose was victorious, then the Red, then the White again. Lord Salisbury, who was father of the Earl of Warwick, was marching with 5000 men to join the Duke of York, when Lord Audley fell upon him with an army of double the strength. Salisbury was the better general of the two—indeed the leaders of the White Rose or Yorkist party were, on the whole, more skilful than those on the other side—and pretending to fly, drew the enemy into a dangerous position. He then turned upon him and defeated him with heavy loss. Lord Audley and as many as 2000 men were killed, and a great number of prisoners was taken. But in a few weeks

all the advantage thus gained was lost. The Queen raised an army and marched to Ludlow, where the Duke of York with the two Nevilles¹ were encamped. For some reason the Duke's army lost heart ; one of Warwick's chief officers went over to the Queen with his men ; the army dispersed without fighting—its sudden breaking up is called "The Rout of Ludlow,"—and their leaders had to fly for their lives, the Duke of York escaping to Ireland, the Earl of Warwick and his father to Calais.

But Queen Margaret used her victory very badly. Towns which were suspected of favouring the Duke of York were given up to plunder. Many of his friends were deprived of their property ; some were put to death. These things made the King unpopular, and Warwick, who had a safe refuge in Calais, came back to England, landing at Sandwich. The men of Kent joined him at once, and he marched to London, which was then, and remained to the end, on the Yorkist side. Queen Margaret had not had time to gather all her forces ; what she had were encamped outside the walls of Northampton. Warwick marched north with all the speed that he could use to attack this army before it could be joined by the Queen's friends from other parts of England. He reached Northampton on July 10, and at once

¹ Salisbury and Warwick.

stormed the camp. The Duke of Buckingham, who was a great-grandson of Edward III.,¹ the Earl of Shrewsbury, and more than three hundred knights, were slain. The Queen, with her young son, fled to Wales. The Duke of York now thought that the time was come for him to claim the crown. He went to London, and calling a Parliament, demanded that he should be recognized as the true King of England. But he did not find even his own friends ready to yield. The King was not a little beloved, notwithstanding all his weakness. And then he and his father and his grandfather had been Kings of England for more than forty years. Parliament had solemnly acknowledged their right to rule again and again ; there was no one in the kingdom but had taken the oath of allegiance to him. Warwick himself told the Duke that he must not claim to be King ; he must be content to be Regent. At last the matter was compromised. Henry was to be King as long as he lived ; the Duke of York was to succeed him. As for the claims of the young Prince, they were set aside.

King Henry was content to accept these terms ; perhaps we may say that he could not refuse them. But Queen Margaret was not satisfied at all. She hurried to the north, where she had many friends, the

¹ His mother was daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, Edward's youngest son.

great house of Percy being chief among them, and with their help raised another army. The Duke of York marched northward to meet them, and finding them at Sandal Castle, a home of his own, near Wakefield, resolved to attack them. His friends advised him to wait, for his army was not equal to the Queen's, and great forces were on their way to join him under his son, the Earl of March. He would not listen to this prudent advice, but engaged at once. The result was a complete defeat. His army was broken by an attack in front; and in the midst of their confusion some troops who had been lying in ambush attacked them from behind. The Duke himself was killed. All the men of rank who were taken prisoners were executed the next day, the Earl of Salisbury among them. Their heads were stuck on the walls of Wakefield, that of York having a crown of paper put round it. The most shocking thing in the story is the murder of the Duke's second son, the Earl of Rutland, a youth of seventeen. A priest had the lad in his charge, and was taking him to a place of safety, when he was overtaken by some followers of Lord Clifford. The young Earl threw himself on his knees before Lord Clifford and begged for mercy. "No," cried the savage noble, "your father slew my father, and I will slay thee and all thy kin!" and he plunged a dagger into his heart.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TWO ROSES (*continued*).

THE death of the Duke of York did not do as much harm to his cause as one might have thought it would have done. He was a clever man, and of a much finer and more generous temper than any, we may say, of the nobles of his time, but he was not a skilful general. His son Edward, who succeeded him, was in this respect much superior, though he was a much worse man. And in something of the same way the death of the Earl of Salisbury was an advantage. The whole power of the family now came into the hands of his son, the Earl of Warwick, and Warwick, like Edward, was a cleverer man than his father.

Just seven weeks after the battle of Wakefield, the Yorkists suffered another defeat. Warwick was anxious above all things to keep London, which was, indeed, the chief strength of his cause. He got together in haste all the troops that he could, and

marched thither. Queen Margaret, who was as anxious to gain the great city as he was not to lose it, had come from the north, though she had not used all the speed that she might. Her soldiers were bent on plundering, and she did not, perhaps could not, keep them in order. The two armies met at St. Albans, and Warwick was defeated.

And now, if the Queen had pressed on at once, the Lancastrians might have been successful. This time, it would seem, her husband stopped her. He could not bear to think that the savage soldiers, who had done so much harm in England already, should plunder and burn the capital city of his kingdom.¹ He persuaded the Queen to wait till the Londoners, who were greatly in favour of the other party, should make a regular surrender of their city. And while she waited, the opportunity was lost.

The Duke of York's son, the young Earl of March, was in the west of England when the news of his father's defeat and death reached him. On February 2, 1461, he met the Lancastrians, under the command of Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke, at Mortimer's Cross in Herefordshire, and defeated them. Jasper fled from the field. His father Owen, who, thirty-

¹ They had scarcely been prevented from destroying the splendid Abbey of St. Albans.

three years before, had married Katharine of France, the fifth Henry's widow, was with him. The stout old man refused to fly, was taken prisoner, carried to Hereford, and beheaded there.

Edward went on towards London, and was joined



SOLDIERS.

on the way by Warwick. The Queen, who had not been able to keep her troops together, did not wait for their coming, but retreated northwards. The young Duke entered London, and without waiting for the assent of Parliament, caused himself to be proclaimed King by the title of Edward IV.

It was no time for him to sit still and enjoy his new dignity. In the course of a few days he and Warwick marched northwards, and met the Lancastrians, who were under the command of the Duke of Somerset, at Towton, a village about ten miles southwest of York. The battle that followed, fought on March 29 (Palm Sunday), 1461, was the greatest if we regard the numbers engaged,¹ and one of the most important, ever fought in this country.

The Duke of Somerset posted his army on some high land in front of the village of Towton. On his right was a steep slope, going down to the beck or brook called the Cock. This is commonly a small stream, but it was then in flood, and could not be crossed. On his left there was another slope, not so steep, but still steep enough to make an attack difficult. In front also the ground fell, but more gently. His great fault was, according to a recent writer, that he crowded his men too much together and so lost the advantage of his larger numbers. Something of the same kind had been done by the French at Agincourt. King Edward and Warwick came on from the south, unseen because of a snow-

¹ It may be reckoned that the two armies together numbered about 100,000 men, of whom three-fifths were on the Lancastrian, two-fifths on the Yorkist sides. Both sides, however, suffered some losses before the decisive day, and it is possible that the numbers engaged at Hastings were nearly equal.

storm which was blowing from that direction, and was therefore driving into the faces of the Lancastrians. But they could see better than they were seen, and sent volleys of arrows among the enemy. These tried to return them, but to little purpose. The Yorkists drew back when they had discharged their arrows; when the volleys of the enemy began to fail they came on again. At last the Lancastrians were provoked to leave their post, to descend the slope in front, and to climb that which rose on the opposite side of the valley to where the Yorkist army stood. And still the snow beat fiercely in their faces. The fight went on fiercely for many hours. About noon, the Duke of Norfolk, who had been some miles behind, came up with fresh troops from Ferrybridge, at which place he had crossed the Aire, and fell on the left flank of the Lancastrians. Still they held out; it was late in the afternoon before they broke and fled. Many were slain on the field of battle; it is said that as many as 30,000 bodies were buried at Towton, and many were drowned in the flooded brook. By the end of the day the Lancastrian army had ceased to be. No prisoners were taken. Never have Englishmen fought so savagely as they did in the War of the Roses.

Even after this Queen Margaret did not give up hope. She had still some friends in England, and

she now began to look for help to the enemies of her country. She gave up Berwick-upon-Tweed to the Scotch, and she pledged Calais to the French, and got some soldiers in return. The great house of the Percies was still on her side, and so were others among the nobles of the north. They fought for her at Hedgeley Moor and were beaten ; they fought again at Hexham, and met with the same fate. King Henry was at Hexham, but soon fled from the field. He escaped, though three of the servants who waited on him were taken. For a year he was in hiding, and was then discovered, and taken to London. Queen Margaret, who had her son, then eleven years old, with her, fled towards the Scottish border. She went through not a few hardships and dangers before she could make good her escape. She fell among a party of plunderers, but contrived to get away while they were quarrelling over their booty. A few hours afterwards she met—so the story runs—one of the outlaws who haunted the great forest of Hexham. She told him that she was the Queen of England, and that the boy with her was the heir to the English crown ; and she begged him to protect, if not herself, at least the child. The man was moved by her prayers, and found a hiding-place for mother and son till their friends could arrange for their escape to France.

The battle of Hexham was fought on May 15, 1464. About a month afterwards Warwick took Bamborough Castle, the last place in England that held out for the Lancastrians, and for six years the land had peace.

CHAPTER VIII.

"THE END OF THE KING-MAKER."

EDWARD had not long been King before a quarrel began between him and his powerful subject, the Earl of Warwick. Warwick was a prudent statesman, and thought that the King could not do better than marry a French princess. This would strengthen him on his throne, because it would prevent the French King, who was the nearest and most powerful of his neighbours, from helping the House of Lancaster. But Edward wanted, as indeed was quite natural, to please himself in the matter of marrying. He had fallen in love with Lady Elizabeth Grey of Groby, daughter of a certain Lord Rivers who had fought on Henry's side in the War of the Roses. This lady he married in 1464. Warwick was greatly

displeased at this, and became still more angry when he found that the King was disposed to raise his wife's kinsfolk to power. Then another cause of difference came up. Warwick still desired an alliance with France, but the King was more disposed to make friends with the Duke of Burgundy, Charles surnamed the Bold, and promised to give him his sister Margaret for wife. Edward and his brother the Duke of Clarence were not on good terms, and the Duke made friends with Warwick, whose daughter he married in the year 1469. In this year the quarrel between the King and Warwick broke out into open war. There was a rebellion in the north, which the Earl and his friends secretly encouraged. The King was not strong enough to put it down, and was actually made prisoner, his keeper being Warwick's brother, the Archbishop of York. About the same time the Queen's father and brother, who had been taken prisoners at a battle in Northamptonshire, were put to death. Warwick was now the real ruler of England; but in the next year King Edward contrived to escape, and Warwick had to fly from the country. He now made up his mind to break with King Edward altogether, and to put Henry again upon the throne. By the help of King Louis of France, he made friends with Queen Margaret. Shortly afterwards he returned to England, where

his brother, Lord Montague, had been busy raising an army. And now Edward, in his turn, was compelled to fly from the country, and to take refuge with his brother-in-law, the Duke of Burgundy. The Duke, while pretending to favour neither of the two parties, secretly helped him, and Edward returned to England. In Yorkshire, where he landed, having been driven out of his proper course by a storm, he was not well received, but as he went southward, great numbers flocked to join him. The Duke of Clarence, “false, fleeting, perjured,” joined him, and when he reached London he was at once admitted within the gates, and found the citizens ready to help him with both money and men. Warwick had followed him from the north, and King Edward lost no time in turning back to meet him. He marched to Barnet, taking King Henry from his prison in the Tower with him.

Warwick, who had with him the Earl of Oxford, and his brother, Lord Montague, had encamped on the table-land which lies to the north of Barnet. Edward marched up Barnet Hill without being hindered, passed through Barnet town, and drew up his army on the southern part of what is now known as Hadley Green. The country was covered with a thick mist, and it seems that neither of the two commanders knew exactly where they were, or where

the enemy was to be found. King Edward, in particular, meaning to draw up his army in line over against that of the Earl of Warwick, drew it up really far too much to the right. The mistake really turned out to his advantage, for the cannonade which the enemy directed during the night on his left wing, or rather where they supposed the left wing to be, did no harm, the balls falling in an empty space. About five o'clock in the morning—it was Easter Day, April 14, 1471—the trumpet sounded for battle, and King Edward's men began to move forwards. No regular plan of attack could be carried out, so thick was the mist. Whenever it grew lighter for a time, and this company or that could see a portion of the enemy, there was some fierce fighting. Then it became thicker again, and the combatants were almost obliged to hold their hands. At first the battle seemed likely to go against King Edward. Lord Montague and the Earl of Oxford found his left wing very weak, and drove it before them in confusion. Some of the flying soldiers took refuge in the houses of Barnet town, some tried to hide themselves in the great forest called Enfield Chase, which in those days came close up to the town.¹ A few even fled as far as London, carrying with them false

¹ What is now known as Hadley Common or Chase is a part of this forest.

tidings of how King Edward's army had been altogether defeated. But, thanks to the mist, the rest of the army knew very little of what had happened, and fought on as bravely and cheerfully as if nothing had gone wrong. On the other hand, the pursuers took to plundering the houses of the townsmen, and their



THE BATTLE OF BARNET.

leaders had much trouble in gathering them together again and putting them in good order. When they had done this to the best of their power, and were making their way back to the field of battle, another misfortune happened to them, and of this also the mist may have been, in part at least, the cause.

They came upon the centre of their own line of battle, and being taken by them for enemies were received with a shower of arrows. One reason for this mistake is said to have been that the Earl of Oxford's men wore a badge that was very like that of King Edward's soldiers. These latter had on their coats a sun with rays streaming from it, while the Earl of Oxford's badge was a star with five points. The one may well have been taken for the other, especially on a misty day. Certain it is that the right wing, when coming back to the battle, received a volley from their own friends. Some of them set up a cry of "Treachery! treachery!" and fled from the field, the Earl himself being among them. The archers too, when they found out what they had done, were not a little disturbed. King Edward saw at once the confusion among his enemies, and felt that the time was come for striking a great blow. He had kept in reserve behind his first line some companies of horse and foot. These were of course quite fresh, while the rest of the two armies had been fighting ever since dawn, that is for nearly five hours. King Edward himself led them on, and fought at their head. There was not a stronger or more skilful man-at-arms than he in either army, and that day he fought more fiercely than ever. The Earl of Warwick's line was soon broken through, and though

here and there small parties of his men continued to resist, the victory was beyond all doubt with King Edward. By an hour before noon all was over, though the pursuit may have lasted some time longer. The King-maker and his brother, Lord Montague, were found dead on the field. An obelisk, set up about a hundred and fifty years ago, marks the spot where, according to tradition, the two were slain. Another memory of the battle is preserved in the name of "Dead Man's Bottom," given to a hollow in Hadley Wood. The two brothers were buried in Bisham Abbey.

But King Edward had one more battle to fight before he could enjoy his kingdom in peace. On the very day of the battle of Barnet, Queen Margaret landed at Weymouth, and was joined by some of the old friends of her cause. Her first intention had been to march on London, but when she heard of Warwick's defeat and death, she turned westwards. Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke, was raising troops in Wales, and if she could join him her chances of victory would be much improved. She got as far as Gloucester, but the Governor of the city would not admit her men within the walls. Thus they were not able to cross the Severn, as they had hoped to do, by Gloucester bridge. They now marched northwards, hoping to get across the Avon at Tewkesbury,

and so make their way to Worcester, and from Worcester into Wales. King Edward was following them, and at Tewkesbury was so close behind that they could not hope to make the passage of the Avon without fighting. Queen Margaret was for moving on, but the soldiers were utterly wearied, for they had marched more than forty miles within the last twenty-four hours, and their leaders resolved to fight where they were. The two armies were about equal in numbers; but King Edward was a far better leader than Somerset,¹ and his soldiers were in better condition. Anyhow the battle was soon over. Somerset, who would probably have done better if he had remained in the strong position which he had taken up, and been content to defend himself, saw, as he thought, an opportunity of attacking the enemy, and fell upon the left wing of Edward's army. He was beaten off, and falling back upon his own lines, put them into confusion. King Edward now charged the centre of the Lancastrians. It broke and fled, and the day was lost. As there is a "Dead Man's Bottom" near the field of Barnet, so there is a "Bloody Meadow" by the side of the Avon below

¹ There were three Dukes of Somerset, Beauforts, and descendants of John of Gaunt : (1) Edmund, killed at the first battle of St. Albans ; (2) Henry, taken prisoner at the battle of Hexham and beheaded ; (3) Edmund, son of Henry, taken prisoner at Tewkesbury and beheaded.

Tewkesbury. Probably the name marks the place where the fugitives, unable to cross the river or get into the town, were slaughtered by the conquerors. Here, it may be, Prince Edward, the last heir of the Lancastrian line, was slain. It seems tolerably certain that he fell either in the battle or in the pursuit. Shakespeare’s story—if indeed the play of *Henry VI.* be Shakespeare’s—is that he was taken prisoner, and brought before King Edward, and that, haughtily maintaining his right to the throne, he was stabbed by the King and his two brothers, the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester.

The battle of Tewkesbury was fought on May 4, 1471. On the twenty-second of the same month the body of Henry VI. was exposed to public view in St. Paul’s Cathedral, London. It was said that he had died a natural death, but no one doubted that he had been murdered, and most people believed that the murderer was Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

Queen Margaret, who had been taken prisoner at Tewkesbury, was kept in prison till the year 1476, when Louis XI., King of France, ransomed her by paying fifty thousand gold crowns. But as she was allowed to leave England, she was obliged solemnly to give up all her claims to the crown, and King Louis got in return for his money a surrender of all

her rights to the provinces which she should have inherited from her father and mother. She died in 1481.

CHAPTER IX.

WILLIAM CAXTON, PRINTER.

THERE never was anything that made a greater difference to the world than when books began to be printed, instead of being written by the hand. This wonderful invention was not made all at once. First there was printing from blocks, which is done by drawing or writing something on a piece of wood or metal, and taking an impression from it. But real printing began when a letter, or sometimes two or three letters, were made in wood or metal, put together in words, and then, having been covered with ink, were stamped on paper. These letters made in metal, for wood was soon given up, are called *type*. Type that was movable, *i.e.* could be put together and then taken to pieces, was the great secret of printing. When this was done, a real beginning was made. It is not certain who first did this. But it is commonly believed to have been one Gutenberg, who set up in business at Mentz in 1441, and in

the following year printed two small books. In 1455 he printed a Bible which is called the Mazarin. The first English printer was William Caxton, who was born about 1422. For many years he was engaged



CAXTON BEFORE EDWARD IV.

in trade—he had been apprenticed to a mercer—and lived in Bruges, as governor of the English traders in that city. But he was always fond of books, and when he was about forty-seven years of age he began to translate from the French a book about the Trojan

War. Not long after he entered the service of the Duchess of Burgundy (sister to our King Edward IV.), and on September 19, 1471, he presented to her his translation, which he had by that time finished. She was much pleased with the book. What a great lady liked was sure to be popular; so many people wanted to have copies that Caxton's hand, as he tells us himself, grew tired with writing, and his eyes dimmed with overmuch looking at the white paper. Then he began to think of printing.

There was a printer in Bruges at this time of the name of Collard Mansion, who had his printing press in a room over a church porch. Caxton learnt the art from him, and the book was printed, as was also another, about chess, which was published in the following year. In 1476 Caxton left Bruges and returned to England (from which he had been absent five-and-thirty years), bringing with him a "fount"¹ of Collard Mansion's type.

The place which he chose for carrying on his new business was the "Abbey" of Westminster. When

¹ A "fount" of type is a set of type, containing a sufficient number of letters for the printing of a book or books. Of some letters there must be many more than of others, many more e's, for instance, than z's. We know that Caxton got his type from Mansion, because there are books still existing printed by both of them, and Caxton's first books have letters of the same shape as we see in Mansion's.

we now speak of "Westminster Abbey," we mean the beautiful church founded by Edward the Confessor, as has been told in the first volume of these Stories.¹ But at the time of which I am now writing the word meant much more. There was then a great house for monks, who were ruled by an Abbot, and all the buildings belonging to this were called the "Abbey." Among these were a gaol for the safe keeping of prisoners, and an almonry, where alms were given to the poor. Some houses near the Almonry were called by the same name, and in one of these, known as "Redhall House," Caxton set up his printing press.² The first book printed in this place was published in 1477.

For fourteen years he lived and worked in Westminster. He was an important person in the parish (St. Margaret's, Westminster), for we find his name signed to the parish accounts, to show that he had looked through them, and found that they were all right. And he worked hard, not only at printing books, but also at writing them, or rather translating them either from the Latin or the French. The number that he printed and published during these

¹ Vol. i. p. III.

² There can still be found at Westminster a name which once belonged to the old "Abbey." This is the "Sanctuary." I shall have to say something more about this later on in this volume. (See ch. x.)

fourteen years was about eighty, and a quarter of these he translated himself. It has been reckoned that these translations of his contain in all about four thousand five hundred pages, folio pages that is, and so four times as big as the pages we commonly see. We must remember that he did with his own hands a great deal of the actual work of printing. A master-printer now only sees that others do their work properly, but Caxton actually "composed," *i.e.* put the letters together into words, and "struck off" copies from the type when it had been composed.

He had many great and powerful friends. King Edward IV. gave him money; came, it is said, to see his printing-office, and gave his patronage to two of his books. The Duchess of Burgundy, whose servant he had been at Bruges, also continued to be his friend. Perhaps, when he came to England in 1480 on a visit to her brother the King, she may have gone to Westminster to see Caxton. He dedicated a book to King Richard III., and another to Henry VII., and he presented the *Story of Æneas* to Prince Arthur, King Henry's eldest son. This was in 1490, when the Prince was four years old.

In 1490 Caxton seems to have lost his wife, for we find that a certain "Mawde Caxton" was buried in the churchyard of St. Margaret's. If this lady was his wife, they had been married nine-and-twenty

years. In this year Caxton began to print a book called *Feats of Arms*, but he stopped the work in order to print another which has the title *The Art to Die Well*. This is just what he would have been likely to do if some one very dear to him died about this time. He went on working up to the time of his death. This seems to have taken place about the end of the year 1491.

One Wynken de Worde, who was his chief assistant, and succeeded him in his business, says of a book published in 1492 with the title of *Lives of the Fathers that lived in the Desert*, that it had been "translated out of French into English by William Caxton of Westminster, lately deceased, and finished on the last day of his life." He was buried in the churchyard of St. Margaret. Six shillings and eightpence was paid for torches and sixpence for ringing the bells. These are much higher fees than were commonly paid. He does not seem to have left much besides his stock of books. Fifteen copies of one of them he left to the parish church. These were sold at different prices, varying from 6s. 8d. to 5s. 8d. during the next ten years. These prices would be equal to about £3 to £2 10s. of our money.

CHAPTER X.

THE TWO PRINCES.

THE last chapter was a pleasant change from the tale of wars and, too often, of wicked deeds of which history is for the most part made up. In this I must go back to the old subject, for I have to tell a very shocking story indeed.

King Edward was dead, a young man, as we should now think him, for he was but forty-two ; but he had wasted his strength in riotous living. He left two sons, Edward, Prince of Wales, who was thirteen years old, and Richard, Duke of York, who was nine, and five daughters. Of the eldest of these five, Elizabeth by name, we shall hear again. Kings as young as Edward, even younger, had come to the throne, and kept it, for a time at least, in peace. The third Henry was but nine ; the second Richard eleven ; the third Edward only fifteen. But there was trouble in store for the two boys, because their nearest kinsman, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the late King's brother, had begun to think that he might win the kingdom

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for himself. His way had been cleared by the death



RICHARD III.

of the brother who stood next in age to King Edward—George, Duke of Clarence. Whether Richard had

had anything to do with Clarence's death I cannot say. Clarence was a foolish, hot-headed man; he had quarrelled fiercely with the King, had been found guilty of treason, and had been condemned to death. How he died no one knows. A story has been told of how he was allowed to choose his manner of death, and that he chose to be drowned in a butt of malmsey wine. But this seems to have been made up long afterwards. That he was found dead in the Tower is certain. It is probable that the King knew how he came by his end, for no one was punished for it. There is nothing to prove that Richard was concerned in it. More we cannot say. That he had something to do with the death of his nephews cannot be doubted.

When his father died young Edward was at Ludlow Castle, which was at that time the appointed dwelling of the Princes of Wales. In the course of a few days he set out for London, in charge of his uncle, Lord Rivers. Meanwhile the Duke of Gloucester, who was in the north at the time of his brother's death, hurried back. He overtook the young Prince at Stony Stratford on April 30, arrested Lord Rivers, Lord Richard Grey, a son of the Queen by her first marriage, and others, and carried his nephew up to London. For a time all seemed to go well. The Council acknowledged

young Edward as King, and such of the chief men of the kingdom as happened to be in London took the oath of allegiance to him. Richard was named Protector to carry on affairs of State as long as the King was under age. The young King, who had been at first entertained in the Bishop of London's palace, was now lodged in the Tower, as being more convenient.

And now it would seem Richard, not content with the royal power, which he had as Protector, began to plot for getting the crown itself. He felt certain that the power would not long be his if the young King lived. In two or three years the boy would be old enough to act for himself, and then he would be certain to prefer to have his mother's kinsfolk about him as his advisers. Richard could count on a good deal of support. He was very popular in the city of London. Many of the old nobility, who hated the Queen's relatives as upstarts, were ready to help him. But one man, with whom he was on very friendly terms, and on whose aid he reckoned, refused to listen to his offers. This was William, Lord Hastings. Richard at once resolved to destroy him. The way he did it was very strange.

There was a meeting of the Council held in the Tower. Richard came late to it, asked pardon for being after his time, and talked about some trifling

matters, asking the Bishop of Ely, who was there, to send for some strawberries out of the garden of his London palace, which was in a street out of Holborn, still called Ely Place. He then left the room, but returned before very long, in great trouble as it seemed. "What, my lords," he cried, "think ye should be done to them who compass my death, seeing that I am near in blood to the King and in charge of this realm?" The other members of the Council were too much astonished to speak, but Lord Hastings said—"They deserve to die as traitors, whosoever they be." Richard then pulled up his sleeve and showed a withered arm, caused doubtless by an illness in his childhood. Very possibly it was not known to any but those who had waited upon him. Evidently it was hidden by his sleeve, and he seems to have had the use of both arms, for he was a skilful knight. "This," he cried, "has been done by my brother's wife and others who have worked with her. See how they have destroyed my body by their witchcraft." "If they have done any such thing," said Hastings, "they deserve to be sorely punished." "Answerest thou me with 'ifs'?" cried Richard, furious with rage; "I tell thee they have done it, and thou hast joined with them, as I will prove upon thy body, thou traitor." As he spoke, he smote with his fist upon the Council table, and a body of armed men rushed in. He bade them seize Hast-

ings, the Bishop of Ely, and others whom he knew to be opposed to his plans. Hastings was hurried out into one of the courts of the Tower and beheaded. The others were put in prison. About the same time Lord Rivers and some of his kinsfolk and friends were executed. But worse things than these remained to be done.

The Queen was in sanctuary at Westminster with her younger son, the Duke of York, and her five daughters. "Sanctuary" was a place, commonly in the neighbourhood of a church, to which persons guilty of offences against the law might fly. As long as they remained in it they could not be touched.¹ She had fled thither as soon as she heard of Richard's coming to London, and of how he had seized her brother. Richard maintained that a child who had committed no crime was not a fit person to take sanctuary, and the Council agreed with him. Still he did not like to take away the boy by force, and thought it better, if he could, to persuade the Queen to give him up. He sent, therefore, the Archbishop of Canterbury to do this, and the Archbishop, who seems to have believed that Richard meant no harm to his nephew, argued the matter with the Queen. At first she refused. She said that the child was sick, and needed his mother's care. Then she hinted

¹ The name of the "Sanctuary" at Westminster still remains.

that the Duke had not much love for his nephew. When the Archbishop declared that the boy had no right in the Sanctuary, she replied that her lawyers had advised her otherwise, and said plainly that she did not think the Princes were safe in the hands of their uncle, seeing that he would be King if they were to die. The Archbishop declared that he would answer, with soul and body, for their safety. On this the Queen consented to give the young Duke up. She bade him good-bye in much grief and fear, saying as she kissed him, "God knoweth when we shall kiss together again." The boy, who cried much on leaving his mother and sisters, was taken by the Archbishop to Richard, who pretended that he was very glad to see him. Glad he was to have both him and his brother in his power, for to have one without the other would have been useless. The young Duke was then sent to be with his brother in the Tower.

This was on June 16. Six days afterwards a certain Dr. Shaw, who was Richard's chaplain, preached a sermon at Paul's Cross, which it was hoped would help his plans. The preacher declared that the late King had been married to a certain Eleanor Butler before he took Elizabeth Woodville to wife, and that the two Princes were not his lawful children. As for the son of the Duke of Clarence, he had lost his

rights, because his father had been condemned for treason. It was hoped that the people on hearing this would cry out for King Richard ; but they were too much surprised to say anything. Richard had to try another plan. He sent the Duke of Buckingham, who was himself a descendant of Edward III., to tell the Mayor and citizens of London the same story that Dr. Shaw had told in his sermon. At the end of his speech a few persons, who, it is likely, had been hired to do it, threw up their caps and shouted, "Long live King Richard III.!" The next day Parliament met. It had been called to witness the coronation of Edward, but it was terrified into acknowledging his usurping uncle. The Duke of Buckingham led a deputation of the two Houses to Richard. They begged him to take the crown. At first he refused. He would sooner, he said, act as Protector for his nephew till the boy should be of age to reign himself. "Nay," said Buckingham, "England will not obey a base-born boy." Then Richard pretended to yield. He said that he consented to be King of England and France. England he would rule, France he would conquer. He and his wife Anne, daughter of the King-maker, were crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury on July 5, nearly three months after the death of King Edward.

And what about the two young Princes, for whose

safety the Archbishop had pledged his body and soul? No man knew for certain, but few doubted that Richard had ordered them to be put out of the way. They were never heard of again, though, as we shall soon see, some people believed, or at least pretended, that one of them escaped. Some years afterwards a confession was made by two of the persons concerned in the murder, and published by King Henry VII. There were some strange things in this story, and it was of course to Henry's interest to have it made quite certain that the Princes were dead. But on the whole we may be satisfied that the story was true. Richard, it seems, sent a certain Green to Sir Robert Brackenbury, who was Constable of the Tower, with a command that he was to put the Princes to death. Brackenbury refused to commit the crime. Then Richard gave a warrant to Brackenbury that he was to give up the keys of the Tower for one night to a Sir James Tyrrell. Tyrrell engaged the help of Miles Forest, one of the men that waited on the Princes, and of a groom of his own, Dighton by name. These two ruffians murdered the lads by smothering them with pillows, and when they had done the deed called Tyrrell to see the dead bodies. Nearly two hundred years afterwards some workmen found under a staircase a great chest in which was a quantity of bones. These were

said by persons skilled in such matters to be the bones of boys who were of the same age as the Princes.

CHAPTER XI.

BOSWORTH FIELD.

RICHARD was not happy on the throne which he had bought at so dreadful a price. He made a progress through England to show himself to his new subjects, whom he tried to attract by the splendid show which he made. At York, to please the Northerners, he had the crown put upon his head a second time by the Archbishop of York, who rules what is called the Northern Province. But the people murmured against him. They could not forgive the crime which by this time few doubted that he had committed. When the crown was again put upon his head, they said that this was done because the poor lads had been murdered since his first crowning, and he now felt himself to be really King.

And then he knew that there were those who were ready to do more than murmur. Chief of these was the Duke of Buckingham. This man had been ready

enough to help in pulling down the kindred of the Woodvilles, whom the late King had so much favoured, but he was not prepared for all that Richard seemed ready to do. He had carried the King's train at the coronation at Westminster, but he had done this only under compulsion. He had been unwilling to come to the ceremony, and had sent word to Richard that he was sick. When the King replied that if he was not well enough to walk he should be carried, he saw that there was no help for it, and came. After the coronation he left London with the King, and rode with him as far as Gloucester. There they parted, Richard going on to the north, the Duke journeying towards Wales. He was already thinking of turning against his master.

On his way he met Margaret, Countess of Richmond, widow of the eldest son of Owen Tudor and Queen Katharine, and heiress of the Beauforts. The Countess Margaret had a son Henry, who seemed the most likely person to set up against Richard. He had, it is true, no real claim to the crown, but then he might marry Elizabeth, King Edward's eldest daughter, and would have his wife's right to depend upon. This, we shall see afterwards, he actually did.

Another enemy of Richard's with whom the Duke of Buckingham took counsel was that Bishop of Ely of whom I wrote something in the last chapter. The

Duke had him in his charge, having been told to find a prison for him in Wales. Richard would willingly have put him to death, but to kill a bishop without any very grave cause, and no such cause could be found against the Bishop of Ely, would have been a



PROCLAMATION OF THE KING.

very dangerous thing. The Duke had had some thoughts of claiming the throne for himself, for he too, as has been said, was of the blood royal.¹ But

¹ Edward III.'s youngest son, Thomas of Woodstock, was created Earl of Buckingham. He had a son Humphrey who became earl, and died without children, and a daughter. This daughter was married to the Earl of Stafford. Their son inherited the earldom of Buckingham, and this son's son was the Duke of Buckingham of whom I am now writing.

then he would not be able to win over to himself those who still held by the House of Lancaster. And as he had already had a wife (a sister of Edward IV.'s Queen) he could not strengthen his claim, as Henry could, by marrying Elizabeth of York. On the whole, therefore, he was inclined to favour Henry. Still he hesitated, till at last the Bishop of Ely, who was afraid that his plans might be betrayed to King Richard, found an opportunity of escaping, and made his way to France.

Richard by this time had heard that some plot was being hatched against him. He sent a message to Buckingham, commanding him to come to London. The Duke had now no choice. To obey was to throw away his life, for Richard, he was sure, knew enough to condemn him. He had therefore openly to take up arms, though he was very far from being ready. He sent messengers to the two Tudors, Henry and his uncle Jasper, urging them to come over at once to England with all the men that they could collect and join him. He himself marched towards England. But everything went against him. The people with whom he wanted to make friends would not trust him. He found the roads guarded and the bridges broken down. When he would have crossed the Severn to join a force that had been raised in Devonshire, that river rose in such a flood

—long afterwards remembered as “Buckingham’s Flood”—that he had to give up the idea. He had got as far as Gloucester, but he had to fall back into Herefordshire. Henry Tudor had come with a small fleet to the coast of Devonshire, but finding no one to welcome him, had sailed back to France. Buckingham’s insurrection had altogether failed. He sought shelter with an old friend at Shrewsbury. But the friend, alarmed for his own life, or tempted, it may be, by the reward of £4000 which the King had offered for Buckingham’s capture, betrayed him. He was taken in a wood, disguised in poor clothing, and carried to Salisbury, where the King then was. He asked leave to plead his cause, but Richard would not hear or see him, and he was beheaded.

He had sent away his little son to another friend, who kept his faith better. The boy was taken, dressed up as a little girl, from one place to another, and at last lodged with a widow lady at Hereford, who kept him safely till the tyrant was dead.

Buckingham’s rebellion happened in the late autumn of 1483. In the April of the next year, on the very day on which Edward IV. had died, Richard lost his only son, Edward, Prince of Wales, after a very short illness. Less than a year afterwards his wife, Anne, daughter of the King-maker, died, after as unhappy a life as woman ever had. There was some

talk after her death of the King marrying his own niece Elizabeth. The Pope of Rome had granted leave—or dispensation, as it was called—for such marriages to take place. But the King denied that he had any such intention. He named the Earl of Warwick, son of his brother, the Duke of Clarence, heir to the throne, and when it became clear that the poor lad was of weak mind, another nephew, the son of his sister Elizabeth and her husband, John de la Pole, who had the title of Earl of Lincoln.

But I must make haste and finish my story. On August 11, 1485, Henry of Richmond landed at Milford Haven. He did not bring with him, as he had once hoped to do, some French soldiers. He came in a single ship with a few nobles of the Lancastrian party, chief of whom was John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and some of those of the other party who did not like the doings of King Richard. The Welsh received him with great joy, not because he had any right to the crown, for this he had not, but because he was a countryman of their own, and they hoped for his favour if he should come to be King. Richard had not at first thought that the danger was serious, but when he saw that Henry had many friends in England, and especially when he found that Sir William Stanley, who was very powerful in North Wales, made an excuse for not joining him, he began

to bestir himself. He marched northward to Leicester, which he reached on August 20. The next day he went on towards Bosworth. The battle was fought on a great plain near that town, called Bosworth Field, otherwise Redmoor. Henry, who had been joined by the Talbots and other great families in the Midlands, had taken up his position on the east of this plain. He had not half as many men as Richard, but he trusted that Stanley, who was close at hand with a large force, and held himself ready to join either party, would be on his side. He had hopes, too, that other friends of the King would leave him when the battle once began.

Shakespeare has described how Richard spent the night before the battle, seeming to see in his dreams the ghosts of those whom he had slain, King Henry, the two young Princes, and Buckingham, his last victim, among them. But he did not forget his duty as a general. It is said that, making the round of the camp at midnight, he found a sentinel asleep at his post and killed him. The next morning he set his line of battle in order, with his archers in the middle, and near them a number of cannon. He was much stronger than his adversary, and if only his followers had been faithful to him, could hardly have failed to win the battle. Bad man as he was, he was a good general and a brave warrior. He put on the armour

which he had worn at Tewkesbury, the last great battle which had settled his family on the throne. Round his helmet he wore, as Henry V. had done at Agincourt, a crown of gold.

Henry made the first movement. The Earl of Oxford charged that part of the line where the Duke of Norfolk was in command. And now the Duke found out how true was the warning which, as the story goes, he had received the night before—

“Jockey of Norfolk, be not so bold,
For Dickon thy master is bought and sold.”

It was so ; the Duke of Northumberland—the Percies, it will be remembered, were old friends of the House of Lancaster—who was in command of the second line, would not move forward to help the first. Richard himself now charged, bent especially on slaying the Earl of Richmond himself. If his great rival could be put out of the way, all might be well. But now the Stanleys, who had up to this time stood apart, saw that it was time to act. They advanced with their force of three thousand men, and Richard’s followers saw that they had changed sides and were going to attack them. One of them pointed out to the King what was about to happen, and bade him mount his horse and fly. If he saved himself that day, he might live to fight again. Richard refused to escape. “Not a foot will I fly so long as I live. I will die King of England,”

he said. Furiously did he fight till he was overborne by numbers, and fell dead to the ground. Among his followers that perished with him was the Brackenbury that had been Constable of the Tower when the young Princes came by their end. For a time the pursuit was hot, and as many as a thousand men are said to have been slain in it. But Henry did not forget that he was now King of England, and called back his soldiers as soon as he could from the slaughter of their countrymen. The crown that Richard had worn was found hanging on a hawthorn bush. A knight brought it to Henry where he stood with Lord Oxford and others of his party. Lord Stanley set it on his head, and the army all over the field of battle shouted, "God save King Harry!"

Richard's body was found covered with wounds. It was thrown across a horse, and carried into Leicester, where it was buried by the sisters of a nunnery there. So ended the long War of the Roses.

A curious story is told, which may be taken to show how the ill-gotten gold of the usurping King brought a curse with it long afterwards. He had slept at an inn in Leicester, and had brought his bedstead with him. More than a hundred years afterwards it was found that this bedstead had a double bottom, and that this was filled with gold

coins. The landlady of the inn was murdered by her servants, who thus got possession of the treasure.

CHAPTER XII.

TRUE OR FALSE?

I HAVE to tell in this chapter two strange stories, so strange that we cannot be sure that we know the truth about them even now.

King Henry was crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury on November 7 in the same year in which he had conquered Richard; about two months afterwards he married Elizabeth of York, and in the September of 1486 he had a son born to him. The son was christened by a name dear to the Welshmen who had fought so bravely for him at Bosworth—Arthur.

But now a new kind of trouble began. News was brought to London that a lad who claimed to be Earl of Warwick had landed in Ireland in charge of a certain priest of Oxford. Soon it was reported that he had been proclaimed King at Dublin, under the title of Edward VI. The real Earl of Warwick was

in the Tower. Henry brought him out, and had him taken through London, where any one that chose might speak to him. As he had been at Court in King Richard's time, there must have been many who knew him. It seems clear that the boy in Ireland was not what he pretended to be. Indeed, it was



MARRIAGE OF HENRY VII. WITH ELIZABETH.

afterwards found out that he was one Lambert Simnel, son of a Thomas Simnel, who was a carpenter. He was tall and handsome, and had been taught to tell the story of how he had escaped from the Tower, and to behave as a Prince should. Indeed, he was more like a Prince than the poor boy whom Henry

kept in the Tower. But it was easy to prove that he was not the Earl of Warwick ; and even if he had been, he had not the least right to be King of England. Yet a powerful nobleman, the Earl of Lincoln, took up his cause. He went over to Burgundy, where his aunt, Edward IV.'s sister, was Duchess, enlisted by her help two thousand soldiers under a certain soldier of fortune (a "soldier of fortune" was a man who would fight for any prince or city that was willing to pay him), Martin Schwarz by name, and then landed in Ireland. He caused "Edward VI." to be crowned, and then crossed over to England, taking with him as many Irish as he could collect and Martin Swartz's soldiers. Some English friends of the House of York joined him. Henry meanwhile had marched from London. The two armies met at Stoke-on-Trent ; Lord Lincoln, with Martin Swartz and his chief Irish allies, fell on the field of battle. One of the few leaders that escaped was Lord Lovel. He was not killed nor taken prisoner, but he was not heard of again. Two hundred years afterwards a secret chamber was found in the house of Minster Lovel (where the Lords of Lovel lived), and in it the skeleton of a man seated at a table. The pretended king, who was with the army, was taken prisoner. He confessed that he had told a false story. The King pardoned him, and gave him a place in the royal kitchen.

Afterwards he was promoted. "Lambert is still alive," says a chronicler who wrote in the latter part of Henry's reign, "and has been made Keeper of the Hawks, after turning the spit for a while in the royal kitchen."

A few years afterwards Henry had to meet a more serious danger of the same kind. A handsome young man, with very good manners, landed from a Portuguese ship at Cork. He gave out that he was Richard, Duke of York, the younger of the two Princes said to have been murdered by Richard III., and that he had escaped from the Tower. We do not know any more of his story, how he had escaped, and where he had been living meanwhile. However, many of the citizens of Cork were satisfied that he was what he claimed to be, and some of the Irish nobles also acknowledged him. Before long the King of France invited him to visit him. The young man went, and was well received. A bodyguard was given him, and a number of English exiles offered him their services. He did not, however, stop long in France. When Henry consented to sign a treaty about which he had been making some difficulties, the King commanded the young man at once to leave the country. He had been only making use of him to hasten the business which he wanted to get finished.

The Pretender, as we may call him, now went to Burgundy, to the same Duchess who had shown herself so ready to the friends of the false Earl of Warwick. She received him in an affectionate way, declaring that she was sure of his being really her nephew. For some time he was content to stay safely where he was. But the people of the country had very good reason to be dissatisfied. The Flemish merchants—Flanders, *i. e.* the country now known as Holland and Belgium, was part of the possessions of the Duke of Burgundy—lost a great part of their trade, for Henry, angry that a man who claimed his kingdom was so well received in Burgundy, would not allow them to have dealings with England. Accordingly the Pretender felt that he must do something. In 1495 he made an attempt to land at Deal, but was beaten back. He then went to Ireland, and with the help of some friends of the House of York, besieged Waterford. But the Lord Deputy who ruled Ireland in the name of the King's second son, Henry, Duke of York,¹ got together some soldiers, and put him and his followers to flight. He was glad to get back to his friend the Duchess of Burgundy.

But he was not to be allowed to stop long with her. A treaty was made between Henry and the Duke of

¹ Afterwards Henry VIII., then four years old.

Burgundy, and one of the points in it was that neither Prince should allow an enemy of the other to remain within his dominions. The Pretender had now to leave, but he found a friend in Scotland, where King James acknowledged him to be the son of Edward IV., and gave him in marriage a noble Scotch lady, a cousin of his own, Lady Catherine Gordon. Twice the Scottish King helped to invade England. There were always plenty of people on the Borders and elsewhere who were ready to take part in an invasion of England. But these expeditions did him no kind of good, and when the English army invaded Scotland in turn, the King and his people grew tired of the whole matter. At last a regular peace was concluded between the two countries by the mediation of the Spanish ambassador. After that the Pretender had to go. He first went to Ireland, but the nobles who had helped him before would have nothing more to do with him. Then he sailed to Cornwall. The Cornishmen, who had already rebelled against some new taxes which the King had demanded from them, joined him in considerable numbers, and he marched to Exeter, which city he in vain tried to take. Then he moved on to Taunton. But when the King's army approached he lost heart, and taking horse, rode with sixty companions to Beaulieu Abbey in Hampshire. There he took sanctuary. Growing weary of

being shut up in this place, and being promised his life, he came out and threw himself on the King's mercy. Henry took him up to London, and made him ride in his train through the city. After this he was allowed to live within the precincts¹ of the Palace of Westminster, not kept in custody, but closely watched. From time to time he was questioned about his past history. After six months he managed to escape, but finding that he could not get away from England, gave himself up to the Prior of the monastery of Shene (near Richmond). The King again spared his life, but put him for a day in the stocks at Cheapside. He was also obliged to make a confession of his real name and birth in front of Westminster Hall, and again at Cheapside. This done, he was sent to the Tower.

In the Tower he made friends with the young Earl of Warwick, and contrived—so at least it was said—another plot. Four of the warders of the Tower were to murder the Governor, and then carry the Pretender and the Earl to some safe place outside England, where the one was to be proclaimed as Richard IV., while the other was to call to arms the friends of his father, the Duke of Clarence, and his grandfather the King-maker. This exhausted King Henry's patience.

¹ The "precincts" would include a considerable space of ground with some houses.

The Pretender was tried, not for his share in this last plot, but for having made war upon the King. Of course he was found guilty. A few days afterwards, having declared on the word of a dying man that his confession was true, he was executed. Even the poor young Earl of Warwick was put to death ; he pleaded guilty to a charge of treason, and was beheaded on Tower Hill.

And now who was this man whom I have called the "Pretender"? According to his own confession he was the son of a Jew of the town of Tournay, who settled for a time in London, and then returned to Tournay ; his real name was Warbeck, Perkin being shortened from Peterkin, or "Little Peter." The Duchess of Burgundy had seen how like he was to Edward IV., and being always on the look-out for ways of doing harm to Henry VII., had contrived the plot. But there are some very strange things about the story. The young man was not in the least like what you would expect him to be if it were true. He was very handsome, had noble manners, and a way of winning the hearts of all with whom he had to do. And then, though we can understand why the Duchess of Burgundy should have taken up his cause, it is hard to see why James of Scotland did so. Altogether the matter must be left in doubt, though it is not at all likely that he was really Richard, Duke of York.

Perhaps he was a son of Edward IV., born before his marriage to Elizabeth Woodville.

NOTE.—When the Pretender landed in Cornwall he put his wife, Lady Catharine, in the Castle of Michael's Mount (near Penzance). She surrendered to Henry, who was kind to her, and made her a lady-in-waiting to his wife. On account of her beauty she was called "The White Rose," a name which the Duchess of Burgundy had once given to her husband. After his death she married a certain Sir Matthew Craddock. Their daughter married William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke.

CHAPTER XIII.

FLODDEN FIELD.

I HAVE said that peace was made between England and Scotland by the help of the Spanish ambassador. To give it a better chance of lasting, King James asked the English King to give him his daughter Margaret in marriage. For some time he had been unwilling to do so, for he loved a lady in his own country. When she died—poisoned, it is said, along with her three sisters by an enemy of her family—he delayed no longer. The two were betrothed, but as Margaret was very young—she was born in 1489—

the marriage did not take place till August 1503, and she was then barely fourteen. During the rest of Henry



A KNIGHT.

VII.'s reign the peace lasted, though there was always more or less trouble on the Border, and other causes of complaint were arising from time to time. The

most serious of these may be told, for it is an interesting story.

There was a certain Andrew Barton, the most famous of the British seamen of the time. Barton had had the honour of commanding the fleet which had carried the Pretender when he was sent away from Scotland, but he was in fact little more than a pirate. Many years before certain Portuguese had plundered a ship belonging to John Barton, Andrew's father, and in 1506, though it had happened so long ago, King James made this an excuse for giving Andrew and his two brothers leave to seize and plunder such Portuguese ships as they could lay hold of. But Portuguese ships were not always to be found; now and then the brothers Barton would seize an English merchantman, if they suspected it had Portuguese goods on board, and sometimes even without this reason. The English Government complained, but without effect. At last the King—Henry VII. had by this time been succeeded by his son, Henry VIII.—proclaimed the Bartons to be pirates, and gave his Admiral, Sir Edward Howard, a son of the Earl of Surrey, leave to attack them. In 1510 Sir Edward, with the help of his brother Sir Thomas, took two of their ships in the Downs, and Andrew Barton was killed in the fight. King James demanded satisfaction for his death, and, as

may be supposed, was but ill pleased when Henry replied that the death of a pirate was not a matter with which kings should concern themselves.

Two years afterwards the Scottish King determined to make war upon England, all the more readily because Henry had invaded France, and had, of course, taken the greater part of his English soldiers with him. He went against the advice of his wisest counsellors, and his wife, Queen Margaret, prayed him with many tears to give up his purpose. It was said too that he had other warnings : that St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, appeared to him in the shape of an old man, and told him that the war would end in disaster ; and that a voice was heard calling the King, and the nobles who were urging him on to make war, to answer for their deed before God.¹ Still he persisted in going, and took with him—a war with England was always popular in Scotland—the very largest army that had ever been gathered in the country.

¹ “ ‘ Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,
Whose names I now shall call,
Scottish, or foreigner, give ear ;
Subjects of him who sent me here,
At his tribunal to appear,
I summon one and all.’

* * * * *

Then thundered forth a roll of names :
The first was thine, unhappy James !
Then all thy nobles came.”

On August 22, King James with his army crossed the Border. If he had marched on at once, he might have done the enemy a vast amount of damage, for the Earl of Surrey, who was in command of the English troops, was not strong enough to meet him. But he wasted the time in the most foolish way, and so lost his chance. The weather grew wet and stormy; the stock of food failed, and a great part of the army left him to go home, for armies could not be kept together in those days as well as they can now. Lord Surrey sent a herald challenging King James to fight on a certain day which he named, Friday, September 9. Of course there was no reason why James should wait so long; indeed there was excellent reason why he should not, namely, that his army was growing weaker, and Lord Surrey's growing stronger, every day. The Earl of Angus, who was the most famous soldier in the army, begged him not to accept the challenge, but only got the insulting answer that if he was afraid he might go home.

The Scottish army was posted in a strong place, where Lord Surrey did not like to attack it. What he did therefore was to try to draw it away. By the advice, it is said, of his son, Sir Thomas Howard,—now Lord High Admiral of England in the place of his brother Edward, who had been killed at Brest in an attempt to destroy the French fleet,—he

marched northward, and so got between the Scottish King and his country. James might either have stayed where he was, in which case Lord Surrey would have been bound to attack him, or he might have fallen upon the English army while it was crossing a river which was in its line of march. He did neither, but moved from the high ground where he had been encamped—Flodden Edge it was called—to a place called Brankston, which was somewhat lower down.

At four in the afternoon the battle began. Both sides had cannon, but those of the English were the better served of the two, and did so much execution among the enemy that these lost no time in coming to close quarters. At first it seemed as if they were going to win the day. The men of the Border, sturdy soldiers who had been used to war ever since they could ride a horse, fell on the right of the English line, where yet another Howard, Sir Edmund, younger brother of the Admiral, was in command. Sir Edmund's troops came from Cheshire; they were used to be led by a Stanley rather than by a Howard, and they were not accustomed to Border ways of fighting. Their line was driven back and broken, and though Lord Dacre came up to their help with the English cavalry, and the Admiral, who was in command of the right centre, also sent them some support, they

never quite recovered their ground. On the left of the English line things went very differently. Here Sir Edward Stanley's archers threw the Highlanders into confusion with their showers of arrows. The mountaineers charged in vain, they could not break the line, and bearing as they did no armour but a shield, they were easily cut down by the English men-at-arms. Meanwhile the Admiral had advanced with his main force, and had beaten back, though not without a fierce struggle, the divisions opposed to him. This done, he turned to attack the Scottish King himself where he stood in the centre, throwing himself on one flank, while Stanley attacked the other, and Lord Surrey came on in front. The Borderers, who might have come to James's help, are said to have refused to move. They had done their part, they said, and would do no more. The King, with a splendid courage, stood firm in his place, and would neither fly nor yield. What followed may best be told in Sir Walter Scott's noble words—

“ But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly bow,
Unbroken was the ring ;
The stubborn spear-men still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.

No thought was there of dastard flight ;
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well ;
Till utter darkness closed her wing,
O'er their thin host and wounded King."

The battle still went on till the night fell. Then Surrey drew off his men, hardly yet knowing what had happened. The King was lying dead, his head cloven by a bill-hook, and round him were hundreds of the best born in all Scotland. There was not a noble family in all the land but lost one or more of its sons. The survivors silently left the place where they had made so gallant a stand. The Scottish army had ceased to be.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GREAT CARDINAL.

IN the first years of the sixteenth century, every one that knew about such things would have said that there was no man more likely to rise to high place in the Church than Thomas Wolsey. He was, it is true, but of humble birth ; but this, though it

would have hindered him if he had wished to be a soldier, did not matter to a Churchman. He was sent to Magdalen College, Oxford, and did very well, taking his degree so soon—he was but fifteen—that he was known as the “Boy Bachelor.” He remained at Oxford for some fourteen years in all—he was born in 1471. When he left it he soon became a very important person. Bishop Fox of Winchester, who was one of the King’s chief advisers, employed him, both at home and abroad. If Henry VII. was pleased with his shrewdness and habits of business, so Henry VIII. found him always a lively companion, ready to join in his amusements, and not without learning, for which Henry had a certain taste. The old King made him Dean of Lincoln; the young one seemed never to be satisfied with heaping gifts and honours upon him. In 1514 he was made Bishop of Lincoln, and in the course of the same year Archbishop of York; fourteen years later, when Bishop Fox died, he was allowed to become Bishop of Winchester also. At the same time he was allowed to hold numbers of livings. These he never visited, and he had so much employment at Court and abroad that he seldom went near the dioceses which he was supposed to govern. Even this was not all. Certain bishoprics were in the hands of foreigners. As they resided abroad, their revenues had to be collected for them.

This was managed by Wolsey, or rather by people whom he employed. For a time he had also a great share in the revenues of St. Alban's Abbey. Altogether he was the richest person in England, the King only excepted. We may even doubt whether the King himself had as great a command of money.



RETINUE OF A GREAT MAN.

In 1515 the Pope made him a Cardinal,¹ and in the same year he became Lord Chancellor. Finally he became the Pope's Legate in England, that is, the

¹ The College of Cardinals consisted of great Churchmen chosen from all countries. They are supposed to be the Pope's counsellors, and when the Pope dies, it is they who have to choose his successor.

person who ruled the Church there for him. This last appointment made him superior to the Archbishop of Canterbury himself.

There was both good and bad in the use which Wolsey made of all these riches and honours. He wanted to do something great for learning, and accordingly he set about founding a college at Oxford. He was allowed to take for its use the property that had been given to certain other institutions, and he also gave large sums of money out of his own purse. If he had been able to carry out his plans, the college, which was to have been called "Cardinal" or "York College," would have been the most splendid in Europe. As it is, Christ Church, for that is the name which it actually received, is a very noble place, and though Henry VIII. is called its founder, that title should properly be given to Wolsey. He also founded a grammar-school in his native town, and had other great schemes, which he would certainly have carried out if he had remained in power.

And then he was really anxious to improve the state of things in the Church of England. Many of the parish clergymen were quite unfit for their offices, and many of those who lived under a religious rule in the monasteries were even worse. Wolsey was really anxious to make them better, though

unfortunately he did not go the best way of setting about it. He did not show a good example in his own life; and there was certainly no man who more neglected his duties, seeing that he had more to do than ten men could possibly have performed.

Then the show and display which Wolsey kept up were beyond all bounds of reason. He had such a train of followers and servants as was not to be seen in any house in the land, scarcely in the King's palace itself. Even the persons who waited on him at table were of noble birth. All this splendour would in any case have caused much envy and dislike. But these were greatly increased when people remembered that this great man was of humble birth. Had he been of royal descent, much might have been excused which could not be pardoned in the "butcher's dog," as his enemies loved to call him.

Much might be written about the cause of his fall, but to tell the story at length would not be suited to this book, and I shall put it very shortly. The King had married the widow of his elder brother Arthur. This was of course against law, but the Pope had given leave. It was the doing of the old King, who was very fond of money, and was unwilling to give back the dowry of 50,000 gold crowns which the Princess Katharine had brought with her. And now

Henry was troubled in conscience, and doubted whether the marriage, even with the Pope's leave, had been lawful. And then he had seen some one else whom he would have been glad to make his Queen. This was a certain Anne Boleyn, daughter of a Norfolk knight, whose wife was a daughter of the Duke of Norfolk. Wolsey had at first been anxious that the marriage should be pronounced null, for he wished the King to marry a French Princess. But he found that it could not be managed. The Pope was unwilling or unable to undo what another Pope had done, and also did not wish to offend the Emperor Charles, who, it should be said, was Queen Katharine's nephew, and was of course very angry at the way in which Henry was treating her. So Wolsey began to hang back. The King was furious at being disappointed; Anne Boleyn hated the man who seemed to hinder her chance of being Queen.

It was in 1529 that the end came. At the beginning of November, Wolsey, as Lord Chancellor, opened the Courts of Law in the usual way. The next day two great nobles came to him with the King's orders that he was to give up the Great Seal,¹ and was to go to a house at Esher, which belonged

¹ The Great Seal of the Kingdom, with which the most important documents are signed. It is kept by the Lord Chancellor.

to the Bishops of Winchester. This was a kind of banishment. He went, and waited. Parliament, which had not met for seven years, had been called together, and it ordered him to be tried for having taken office from the Pope without the King's leave. The charge was not true; the King had not only given him leave, but had been very desirous that he should have it. This leave Wolsey had under Henry's own hand and seal. Yet he would not bring this forward, but pleaded guilty. The fact was that Henry again and again sent kind messages to him, assuring him that it was not intended to do him any harm, and that all would come right in the end. And he believed him, though he must have known the text, "Put not your trust in princes." The truth was that Henry had kind thoughts about his old companion, but let himself be turned by those about him who hated Wolsey, chief of all, by Anne Boleyn. If Wolsey could have seen the King, the end might have been different; but this was never permitted. As the Cardinal had pleaded guilty, sentence was passed upon him. All that he had was to be forfeited to the King. He wrote to Henry, and begged that at least the Oxford College might be spared. To this he got no answer. And yet the King now and then gave him some little comfort. He fell ill, and Henry sent his own physicians to him; and when

they reported that his old favourite was suffering more from trouble of mind than from sickness of body, and that he would die unless he had some comforting words, he sent a ring with a kind message and bade Anne Boleyn do the same.

About two months afterwards Wolsey received the King's command to go down to York, and take up his duties there as Archbishop. He went, staying for a week on his way at Peterborough, where on the Thursday in Holy Week he washed the feet of fifty-nine pilgrims.¹ He remained at York for some seven months, busying himself with his duties as Archbishop. Then the last blow was given. Lord Northumberland brought a warrant to apprehend him for high treason. (He had had some quite harmless communications with the French ambassador.) He started to go to London, and though he was ill, would not delay his journey. On the third day he reached Leicester Abbey. The monks with their chief were standing ready to receive him. "Father Abbot," he said, as he was helped to get down from his mule, "I am come to lay my bones among you." He was taken at once to bed, and lay there for two days; on the third he prepared for death. He sent a message to the King, in which among other things he said: "If I had served my God as diligently as I have served

¹ Fifty-nine was the number of his own years.

my King, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs." At eight o'clock in the evening he died. It was the 29th of November, the eve of St. Andrew, in the year 1530.

CHAPTER XV.

THE GREAT CHANCELLOR.

WHEN Wolsey gave up the Great Seal, it was to Thomas More that the King handed it. Thomas More, who was then nearly fifty years of age, was one of the most famous men in England, as he was one of the very best. He was the son of a judge,¹ and had himself followed the profession of the Law. But he was a good deal more than a lawyer. He had studied at Oxford, and had been very well thought of as a scholar, and he was a member of Parliament at the early age of twenty-one. In Parliament he was noted for his independence, even

¹ The old man was still alive and still able to perform his duties. It is related that every day the new Chancellor, before going to his own court, would pay a visit to that in which his father sat, and kneeling down would receive the old man's blessing.

persuading the House of Commons to refuse, on one occasion, the money which the King demanded. This was in the days of Henry VII. When the younger Henry came to the throne, he soon took More into his service. As time went on he continued to rise in favour. In 1521 the King published a book on theology, in which More is said to have helped him; and More himself wrote a book in defence of the King. Henry professed, and we may believe really felt for the time, a great affection for him. More was not only very learned but also very witty, and the King, as long as he was not thwarted in what he desired, could be very friendly and even affectionate. But More always knew how very easily all this might be changed. Once when the King had come unexpectedly to More's house at Chelsea, and had dined with him, he walked after dinner about the garden with his arm round his host's neck. When he was gone More's son-in-law, Thomas Roper, said to him that he must be very well pleased to have the King on such friendly terms with him. He had never been seen before to be so familiar with a subject, except that once he had walked arm-in-arm with Wolsey. "I find his Grace my very good lord indeed," was More's answer, "and I believe he does as singularly favour me as any subject within this realm. However, son Roper, I may tell thee, I have no cause to

be proud thereof, for if my head would win him a castle in France, it should not fail to go."

Nor did it fail to go, as we shall see, but not for a castle in France. The way this came about was as follows: the Pope would not pronounce that the



THE GREAT BIBLE.

King's marriage to Queen Katharine was null. So the King, having got opinions in his favour from sundry learned persons, had sentence pronounced to that effect by Thomas Cranmer, the new Archbishop of Canterbury. This was in May 1533, but the King had been already for some months married to

Anne Boleyn. Early in the next year an Act of Parliament was passed which declared that the realm of England was not under the spiritual rule of the Pope, and that the King was entitled to have the supreme power which had hitherto been exercised by the Pope. We must not suppose that all this was done on Anne Boleyn's account. The English people had always been jealous of the Pope's power, and the best English kings had been careful to see that it never grew too great. Thus a decree or *Bull* of the Pope, so called from the large round seal—*bull*—which was fastened to it, could not be brought into the country without the King's leave. There was then a good deal to make Henry think that he was doing right when he acted as he did. On the other hand, we may be sure that if the Pope had given way in the matter of the divorce, the course of things would have been very different.

For some time More had seen something of what was going to happen. We may wonder that he ever took the office of Chancellor. Perhaps he hoped that the King would give up his plans if he found that the Pope was firmly set against them. He certainly did not fear, at least then, that there would be an absolute breaking away from Rome. And it must be remembered that it was not easy to refuse anything to King Henry, especially when he asked it in a good-

humoured way. However, in May 1532 he gave up the Great Seal. He told the news of his giving it up to his wife in this way. He was at Chelsea Church on the day after his resignation, and had been singing as usual in the choir. It had been the custom for one of his gentlemen to go to Lady More's seat, and to let her know that the Chancellor had left the church by saying, "My Lord is gone before." This time he went himself and said, "My Lord is gone" (*i. e.* he was no longer my lord). Lady More was very angry when she found out what had happened. Among other things she said, "Would to God I were a man, you should quickly see what I would do. What! why, I would go forward with the best; for, as my mother was wont to say, it is ever better to rule than to be ruled, and therefore I would not be so foolish as to be ruled where I might rule." All that Sir Thomas said to this was, "By my faith, wife, I dare say you speak truth, for I never found you willing to be ruled yet." So far the King was very friendly. But the end was to come soon. The new Queen was to be crowned on May 31, 1533, and Sir Thomas More was invited to be present at the ceremony. He would not go; he was not satisfied, he said, of the lawfulness of the marriage. This year More's enemies, of course at the desire of the King, endeavoured to destroy him by what was called an Act of Attainder.

This was a Bill brought into Parliament declaring that such and such a person was guilty of a certain crime named. If the two Houses passed this Bill, and the King gave his assent, the person was taken to be guilty just as if he had been tried in the regular way by a judge and jury. However, the attempt failed. There really was nothing to bring up against More, and his name was struck out of the Bill. Then these same enemies tried to make out that he had taken bribes while holding his office of Chancellor. They failed again. There never had been a more honest judge upon the Bench, and More was easily able to show that the stories brought up against him were nothing at all. One may serve as a specimen. It was said that he had received from a certain widow-lady, who had a suit in his court, a New Year's present of a pair of gloves with forty gold pieces. The lady had sent the gloves and the money, hoping, we may suppose, to bespeak the Chancellor's favour. He returned the money with this message—

“It would be against good manners to refuse a lady's gift ; therefore I take the gloves, but as for the *lining*, I utterly refuse it.”

The next attack was one which could not fail. In April 1534 Parliament passed an Act, declaring that the King's marriage with Katharine was null, that

his marriage with Anne Boleyn was lawful, and that any child of his by Anne had the right of succession to the throne. (A child, afterwards Queen Elizabeth, had been born in September 1533.) It was also provided that any person might be called upon to take an oath that he assented to all these things, and that if he refused to do so he was guilty of treason. This oath More was at once called upon to take. He refused. He would swear, he said, to the succession, but the oath as it stood was against his conscience. Nothing could move him. When the Duke of Norfolk warned him that it was dangerous to resist the King, quoting the text, "The wrath of a King is death," "Is that all?" he replied. "Then there is no more difference between your Grace and me, than that I shall die to-day and you to-morrow; and 'tis surely better to offend an earthly king than the King of heaven." For four days he was put in the charge of the Abbot of Westminster, the King hoping that he might be persuaded. As he still refused, he was sent to the Tower. The Lieutenant of the Tower apologized to him for not making him as comfortable as he could wish. The King, he said, would be displeased. "Good Master Lieutenant," said More, "whenever I find fault with the entertainment which you provide do you turn me out of doors."

For many months he was kept in prison, many

persons trying to frighten or persuade him. But they came in vain. He could not act against his conscience. On July 1, 1535, he was brought to trial. He defended himself well, but in those days a man accused of treason was never acquitted, and the jury, after but a few minutes' consideration, found him guilty. The Lord Chancellor was about to pronounce sentence, when the prisoner stopped him. "My lord," he said, "when I was towards the law, the manner was to ask the prisoner whether he could give any reason why sentence should not be pronounced against him." The Lord Chancellor had to own that he was wrong, though of course nothing that More could say could make any difference. He was taken back to the Tower with the edge of the axe turned towards him. When he reached the wharf where he was to land, his daughter Margaret Roper rushed through the guard and threw her arms round his neck, crying out, "My father, my father!" He blessed her, and sought to comfort her. Still she clung to him, till the rough soldiers themselves were in tears.

After this he had not long to wait for his release. In the early morning of July 6, the King's messenger came to him with the tidings that he must die that day at nine o'clock. He heard the message with calmness. He would have dressed himself in his best clothes—the clothes belonged by custom to

the executioner,—for, as he said, “if they were of cloth of gold I should think them well bestowed on him who should do me so singular a service.” He was persuaded, however, to change them for a frieze gown; but he sent the executioner a gold coin. When he came to the scaffold, he thought that it looked weakly built. “Lend me thy hand, Master Lieutenant,” he said, “and see me safe up; as for my coming down, let me shift for myself.” He said the fifty-first Psalm (“Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great goodness”), and then said to the executioner, who had asked his pardon, as was the custom, that it was the greatest of services. “Pluck up thy spirits,” he added, “and be not afraid to do thy office. My neck is very short; see that thou strike not awry for thy credit’s sake.” And yet again, bidding him hold his hand a moment, till he should put his beard out of the way, “for that is no traitor: it hath not offended his Highness.”

His Highness was playing backgammon with Anne Boleyn when the news of his old friend’s death reached him. “Thou art the cause of this man’s death,” he said to her in an angry tone, and left the room. Whatever he felt did not prevent him from seizing the dead man’s house and goods. But it added to the aversion that was growing up in his mind against the Queen herself. In less than a year she had followed More.

Margaret Roper got possession of the severed head. She had it embalmed and placed in a casket. When she was dying it was put in her arms, and it was placed in her coffin.

“Morn broaden’d on the borders of the dark,
Ere I saw her, who clasp’d in her last trance
Her murder’d father’s head.”

Tennyson, *Dream of Fair Women*.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BOY-KING AND THE THREE-WEEKS QUEEN.

WHEN Henry VIII. died (January 28, 1547) there was no doubt about who was to succeed him. It was his son Edward, born of his third Queen, Jane Seymour, whom he had married after the death of Anne Boleyn. Edward was but eight years old when he came to the throne, and nearly four months short of fifteen when he died. What his character really was it is not easy to say. That he was very much bent on having his own way is clear; it is just what we should expect from the son of such a father. We are told that he was “inclined to generosity.” It has been said that he was unfeeling, because he

records in his diary without a word of pity or sorrow that his uncle had been executed. I am not sure



EDWARD VI.

that this is fair. A young boy, if he wrote such a thing down at all, probably would write it in the very shortest way. And he had been in the midst of such

things ever since he was old enough to take notice of what was happening round him. Beyond all doubt he was clever. "He begins to wish to understand what is going on," says the person who describes him as inclined to be generous; while a physician who was called in to attend him during his last illness says that his knowledge of Greek and Latin and of other matters was quite extraordinary for his years. He showed his fondness for learning, not only by diligently following his own studies, but by taking great interest in the education of others. He had something to do with the foundation of grammar schools, many of which are called by his name. The most important of all, and one in which he took a particular interest, was Christ's Hospital in London. This still flourishes, and is often called the *Blue Coat School*, on account of the dress which the boys wear.

Another thing that he cared for even more than he cared for his books was his religion. A great change had been taking place in England, and elsewhere also, in what men believed since the early years of the sixteenth century. It had indeed begun long before, but I have said nothing before about it, because it is not a matter that I care to write about in such a book as this. Even now I will say no more than that there was one party which held by the old or Roman belief about Christian doctrines, and

another which held by the new or Reformed belief.¹ The young King was very strongly attached to the party of the Reformers, and was anxious that, whatever happened to himself, this should continue to rule the country. As time went on, it became very plain that he could not live very long. In the spring of the year 1552 he had an attack of both small-pox and measles, was often ill during the summer, and caught so bad a cold in the autumn that he never recovered from it. What was there to be done? Naturally his successor would be the Princess Mary, daughter of Katharine of Arragon. But Mary held most firmly by the old faith, and would not so much as listen to the preaching of the new. As she was seven-and-thirty years old, and was as determined to have her way as her father had been, she would certainly undo all that had been done in setting forward the Reformed faith. Then there was the Princess Elizabeth. She was of the party of the Reformers, but it would be very difficult to get England to accept her instead of her elder sister. And she too was of age—she was two-and-twenty—and with a much stronger will than the great nobles

¹ This had much to do with what has been said about King Henry breaking away from the Pope. But Henry, though he did this, never held the Reformed doctrines; on the contrary, he persecuted those who did hold them. For the most part, however, the old faith went with obedience to the Pope, and the new with breaking away from him.

of her brother's Council liked, anxious as they were to keep power in their own hands. There was a Scotch cousin indeed, Mary, daughter of James V. of Scotland, and so grand-daughter of Margaret Tudor, Henry VIII.'s sister. We shall hear of her again. At this time she was in France, and was to be married, when old enough, to the Dauphin, or eldest son of the King of France. It was quite out of the question that she should be Queen of England. The most powerful of King Edward's advisers, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland,¹ chose for the future Queen Lady Jane Grey, eldest daughter of the Marquis of Dorset and his wife Frances Brandon, Frances Brandon being the daughter of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and Mary Tudor, younger sister of Henry VIII. First he brought about her marriage to his own son, Guildford Dudley. She was fifteen, and the bridegroom two years older. This was in May 1553. Edward did not particularly like Lady Jane; perhaps he was jealous of her, for she was even more learned than himself.² But he was persuaded to name her

¹ This was not the Percy title, of which we have heard before. The Percies were in disgrace.

² She could speak French and Italian; could write Latin very well; had more than once spoken Greek, and could understand Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic. All this we know from a very learned man, Roger Ascham, who found her one day sitting at home reading Greek, while all her family were hunting deer.

as his successor, because she would hold by the new faith. Accordingly he allowed a deed to be drawn up by which the crown was to go first to any son there might be of Frances Brandon, then to Lady Jane Grey, then to Lady Jane's sons, then to her sisters, and so on. As Frances Brandon had no sons, this was to leave the crown to Lady Jane. The judges were called in to put this in proper shape. They said that it could not be done. The matter was settled by Act of Parliament and could not be altered except by Act. At last they consented, if they had an order to do it and a pardon, for it was high treason, under the Great Seal. The Council all signed it, Archbishop Cranmer last of all; he was most unwilling to do it, knowing that the King's sisters had the better right, but the dying boy begged him so earnestly to do so for the sake of religion that at last he gave way.

Edward died on July 6. Poor Lady Jane knew nothing of what had been going on. Even the King's death was kept from her for a time. Then her father and mother, with the Duke and her husband, came and explained what was done, and falling on their knees, did homage to her as their Queen. Astonished and troubled, she fainted away. For a time, after coming to her senses, she refused to consent. But she could not hold out against the

persuasions and even threats of all her family, and gave way. That evening—it was the 10th of July—she was proclaimed, but no one cried, God save the Queen!

Her reign, if it can be called a reign, lasted little more than two weeks. Nobody cared for her, or indeed knew anything of her. What they did know of her father-in-law, who, they were sure, had set the whole affair going, they did not like. Even he saw that the thing was hopeless, and proclaimed Queen Mary at Cambridge. Lady Jane and her husband were sent to the Tower. At first Mary meant to spare their lives. But there were insurrections against her. One, led by Sir Thomas Wyatt, for a time seemed dangerous. When this had been put down, the two prisoners were executed, Dudley on Tower Hill, Lady Jane, on account of her royal descent, within the walls of the Tower. The day was February 12, 1554.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE RIVAL QUEENS.

I HAVE said nothing about the reign of Queen Mary. It was a dismal time for England. The Queen, who had suffered herself on account of her religion, to which she was indeed sincerely attached, was bent upon bringing her subjects back to the old

faith. Many who refused were cruelly put to death. About these things, however, you will have to read



QUEEN ELIZABETH.

elsewhere. I must mention two things only: that Mary, very much against the will of her subjects,

married Philip II., King of Spain, and was not at all happy in her marriage ; and that the town of Calais was taken by the French in the month of January, 1558. The Queen was much distressed at this loss, and is said to have declared that after her death they would find "Calais" written on her heart. She died in the month of November that same year ; and to the great joy of the nation was succeeded by her sister Elizabeth.

There was much to make people hopeful, but there were also many difficulties in the way. The new Queen's title to the Crown was doubtful, and there was a great party in England, not half or nearly half the people, but still numerous, which did not wish well to her. Both at home and abroad things had been much mismanaged. There was no money in the Treasury, and England was at war with France, not for any object of her own, but to suit the plans of King Philip of Spain. And the new Queen herself was, in some respects, a strange person. She knew how to choose good counsellors, and, on the whole, she trusted them, and listened to their advice. William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, was one of her ministers during nearly the whole of her reign—in fact, from her coming to the throne, till he died, on August 4, 1598.

But she had very bad favourites, and sometimes she

would let them lead her into very dangerous positions. She was bent on doing great things for England, but sometimes she was so mean that she would not furnish her soldiers and sailors with proper pay and food. And she was foolishly vain—vain of her learning, of which she really had a good deal, and vain of her beauty, which was nothing very remarkable, though all her courtiers, good and bad, spoke to her and of her, and that to the very end of her life, as if she was the most lovely creature under the sun.

But the person who really was her greatest danger, and of whom, at the same time, this vanity of hers made her most jealous, was Mary Stuart of Scotland.

When I last mentioned Mary, it was just before the death of Edward VI. She was then betrothed to Francis, eldest son of King Henry II. of France. The marriage took place in 1558. In the following year King Henry died, and her husband succeeded him. Mary, who was now Queen of France, assumed the arms and style of Queen of England. This was a clear denial of Elizabeth's title. In 1560 her husband died. Eight months afterwards Mary came to Scotland. She was only nineteen, very beautiful and charming, very accomplished, and in a degree learned—she had quite a large library of books, considering the age. But she led a very troubled life. There was the same division in Scotland as there was in England,

between the favourers of the old faith and the favourers of the new; and Mary, unlike her cousin Elizabeth, belonged to the old. This made her the hope of those who hated Elizabeth. She was, in any case, the next heir to the English Crown, and many believed that it rightfully belonged to her now, partly because they held that Elizabeth's mother had not been properly married, and partly because she, as a heretic, was not qualified to reign. In 1565 Mary married a certain Lord Darnley, a foolish and ill-behaved young man, with whom she soon began to quarrel. In the following year she had a son, of whom we shall hear again. Elizabeth was troubled at the news. "The Queen of Scots," she cried, "hath a fair son, while I am but a barren stock." She had refused to marry, though her subjects had time after time urged her to do so, and though she amused herself by encouraging various suitors, some of them foreign princes, among them a brother of the French King, Henry III., and some of them English nobles, as William Courtenay, Earl of Devon, and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Dudley is said to have procured the murder of his wife, Amy Robsart, in order to clear the way for his marriage to Elizabeth. But she could never resolve to give up her liberty, and at the same time she was really afraid that her marriage would injure the country. All the other

parties, their own hopes being gone, would have joined together against her and her husband.

Mary, with her son to come after her, was now a really dangerous rival, and if she had been a wise woman, could hardly have failed to make good her claim to the Crown. But a wise woman, happily, it may be, for this country, she was not. She had done, as we have seen, a very foolish thing in choosing Darnley for a husband, but worse was to follow. He refused to attend the christening of the young Prince. Afterwards he fell ill of small-pox, and Mary went to see him, and behaved very affectionately to him. When he could be moved, he was brought to a house outside the walls of Edinburgh, called the Kirk of Field, because it had once been a house of monks. It was a small, ruinous place. Mary slept on the first floor ; her husband was below. To all appearance she was very loving to him. But a few days after he came into the house, he was warned that, unless he got away at once, he would never leave it alive. On February 9—*i.e.* twelve days after Darnley came to Kirk of Field—there was a wedding of two of the royal servants at Holyrood Palace, and a ball afterwards. The Queen was at the wedding and at the ball ; she went in the evening to bid her husband good-night, but she slept at the palace. That night Kirk of Field was blown up

with gunpowder. Some of the servants were found dead among the ruins. But Darnley's body was discovered eighty yards from the house, with that of his page. They were dressed in their shirts only ; neither showed any marks of scorching. Indeed there were no signs to show how they had come by their death. That they had been murdered was plain.

One thing comes out quite clearly, when, very unwillingly and after a long delay, the Queen ordered an inquiry to be made into the affair, that the man who had plotted the murder was a certain James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell. Whether Mary herself was also guilty was doubted then, as it is doubted now. It is needless to say any more, than that, little more than three months afterwards, May 15, 1567, she married the murderer. Whether she was guilty or not, the suspicion was so strong that, in Scotland at least, it ruined her hopes. For a time it looked as if there might be civil war. Two armies, one led by Mary and Bothwell, the other by the nobles who were her enemies, actually met. But there was no fighting. Mary's soldiers left her, and she had to yield herself prisoner, and a few weeks later was shut up in Lochleven Castle and compelled to give up the crown. In the year following she escaped, but her friends were defeated at Langside (just a year after her marriage), and she had to take refuge in England.

In England she remained for nineteen years, taken from castle to castle, and, wherever she was, a cause of anxiety and danger to Elizabeth. In 1570 the Pope solemnly declared that Elizabeth did not belong to the Church, and that she was not rightfully Queen of England. This turned against her many Roman Catholics who up to that time had been loyal. Abroad the great Roman Catholic rulers were her enemies, and, if they could have given up their jealousies and united against her, she could hardly have held her own. Then plot after plot was made in England against her life. With all these things Mary Stuart was more or less mixed up. She knew about many of them, and it was to put her upon the English throne that all were made. Again and again Elizabeth was urged to get rid of her. If Lord Burleigh had had his way, she would have been executed long before the end of the nineteen years.

At last a plot was discovered in which she was proved, by the testimony of her own handwriting, if the English ministers of state were to be believed, to have had a part. One Anthony Babington, who had been one of Mary's pages, and had been charmed by her, as were all who came near her, John Ballard, a Jesuit priest, who had obtained the Pope's leave for the assassination of Elizabeth, and others conspired to murder the Queen, and to raise the country for Mary

Stuart. Babington wrote to Mary, telling her of what had been planned, and she sent him an answer, in which she approved of his plans, and urged him to carry them out with all speed. But the English ministers knew what was being done,—they had spies everywhere,—and at the proper time arrested the conspirators. Mary's letter was found among their papers, and Babington's letter to her in her room, which was searched during her absence. Of course all these things are doubted or denied by those who take Mary's side. More need not be said. She may not have been guilty, but Elizabeth had only too much reason for believing that she was. The Queen had many doubts as to what she should do. She hated the idea of having to put her cousin to death ; but then, as she said to herself, it was " Strike, or be stricken." If it could have been done without her knowledge it would have pleased her best. At last she gave a half consent, and on February 8, 1587, Mary Stuart was beheaded.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN THE WESTERN SEAS.

NO man was more hated in England during the second half of the sixteenth century than Philip II., King of Spain. Men remembered how busy he had been in the cruel persecution which had been carried on during the reign of his wife, Queen Mary. They knew that he was always on the watch to recover the power which he had lost at Mary's death, that he hoped to conquer and enslave their country, and that he had plotted more than once the death of their Queen Elizabeth. And in the minds of many there was a feeling at work which was not less strong than hatred. This was the hope of gain. Spain had become, since the discovery of America, marvellously rich. The Gulf of Mexico and the neighbouring seas were called the "Spanish Main." Ships came in numbers from thence, bringing treasure, chiefly silver, to fill King Philip's treasury. It is no wonder that bold English seamen began to think that it would be a fine thing if they could at the same time do damage

to the great enemy of their country and enrich themselves. One of the plans they had was to seize the treasure-ships as they sailed across the sea ; another, bolder and more dangerous, but, if it succeeded, certain to be even more profitable, to plunder the settlements on the Main from which the ships were wont to sail.

The most famous of these adventurers was Francis Drake. He was a Devonshire lad, born in 1545, the son of a yeoman, who was a Protestant preacher, and afterwards became Rector of Upchurch in Kent. The elder Drake had, it is said, been a sailor himself, and the son went to sea when quite a young boy. He was apprenticed to a master-mariner, who traded with France and Holland. His master, dying, left him his vessel, and young Francis began business on his own account. This, however, he soon gave up, to serve, under one leader or another, in voyages across the ocean. A fine story might be told about every one of these voyages, and about others which Drake made on his own account ; but I have to be brief, and must be content with telling the tale of one expedition.

In November, 1577, Francis Drake sailed out of Plymouth harbour with five ships, not one of them of more than 100 tons burden. It was pretended that he was going on a trading voyage to Egypt, but

it was scarcely a secret that he was really bound for



SHIPS IN A STORM.

the Spanish Main. The Queen had helped him with money in fitting out his ships, and many of the chief

nobles about the Court had taken shares in the venture.

On his way out a terrible thing happened. The Queen had tried to keep the help which she gave to the expedition a secret from her chief minister, Lord Burleigh. She knew that the thing was not to his liking, and that he would try to stop it. The fact was that he wanted England to remain at peace with Spain, and that this could not be if Drake was not only permitted to sail, but even helped by the Queen. Lord Burleigh found out what was going on, but he could not stop the expedition. All that he could do was to try to make it fail. He employed a man, Thomas Doughty by name, whose business it would be to do all the harm he could to Drake and his venture. Doughty soon went to work; a deadly quarrel grew up between him and his chief; things went on from bad to worse, till Drake, feeling sure that unless he got rid of the cause of the trouble the whole business would be ruined, resolved to act. When he reached the Straits of Magellan, he brought Doughty to trial on a charge of treason. The court, which consisted of officers of the ships, with the second-in-command as their chief, found the accused guilty. Drake and Doughty had been close friends. They now took the Holy Communion together; Doughty kissed the Admiral in token of his forgive-

ness, and then knelt down at the block. The executioner dealt him a blow with the sword, and holding up the severed head, cried out, "Lo! this is the end of traitors."

This terrible duty done, Drake set sail again. He passed through the Straits of Magellan without loss, but when he had reached the Pacific a dreadful storm burst upon his little squadron—three out of the five ships which had sailed from Plymouth had been broken up. One of the three, the *Marygold*, after three weeks' struggle with the weather, went down with all hands, another, the *Elizabeth*, was taken back to England by the second-in-command. Drake was left alone with the *Pelican*, now named the *Golden Hind*.

Slowly he made his way up the western coast of South America. He sailed into the harbour of Valparaiso, seized a ship laden with gold and provisions, and took all that was worth taking in the town itself. At other points on the coast he laid his hands on sundry prizes, and just missed getting hold of others. The country was becoming alarmed, and Drake, who had been hoping to be joined by the *Elizabeth*, taken home, as we know, by its captain, resolved to act by himself. He boldly entered the harbour of Lima, and searched all the vessels that were in it for treasure. He found nothing, but he

heard of a prize which, if he could only secure it, would repay him for all his labours. A treasure-ship had been sent off some fortnight before to Panama. For three days a dead calm kept him where he was, and almost betrayed him into the hands of the Spaniards. Then a breeze sprang up, and he started in pursuit. The treasure-ship had a great start, but the *Golden Hind* was a fast sailer. At Payta, near the northern boundary of Peru, he was only two days behind; on March 1 his look-out man, his own nephew, John Drake, spied the prize. All day he followed her unseen; when it was dark he ranged alongside, and took her without having to strike a blow. It took three days to count and transfer the booty. When they came to reckon their gains, they found that they had secured thirteen chests of piasters,¹ eighty pounds weight of gold, a great store of precious stones, and uncoined silver in such quantities that it served to ballast the ship.

After such a piece of good fortune the best thing to do was to go home. Another capture he made, and this was of two pilots who had with them the charts by which the Spanish ships were accustomed to navigate the Pacific. Then he turned homewards, but the thought came into his mind that he might go

¹ A piaster, or "piece of eight," was of much the same value as a dollar, *i. e.* a little more than 4s.

by the North-West Passage,¹ and so gain the glory of a great discovery. Accordingly he sailed northward, and reached about 45° north latitude, when the increasing cold, and the look of the land, which showed no prospect of a passage eastward, made him turn back. He coasted along to where the city of San Francisco now stands. Thence he boldly made for the Moluccas, three thousand miles away across the unknown Pacific. For more than two months the voyagers were out of sight of land. When they reached it they were by no means out of danger. Their narrowest escape was early in 1580, when the *Golden Hind* struck on a reef near one of the islands of the Celebes group. For nearly a day and a night it seemed that the great voyage was to end in shipwreck after all. Drake began to lighten the ship, a painful business when the cargo was so precious. Suddenly the wind changed, and the *Golden Hind* slipped back into deep water. After refitting in Java, Drake set his face homeward. We, who are used to go round the world

¹ It has been always believed that there was a short way to the Eastern Coast of Asia, going westward from Europe, sailing round the north of the continent of North America, and so getting into the Pacific. A reward was offered to any one who should discover such a passage, and was actually paid to Captain McClure between forty and fifty years ago, but the discovery was practically useless, as the way would for ninety-nine years out of a hundred be blocked with ice.

in less than seventy days, read with surprise that the journey took him the best part of a year. It was not till September 28, 1580, that the *Golden Hind* reached Plymouth. Drake had been away from home nearly three years.

For a time it seemed as if the great sailor was to receive a very poor welcome at home. King Philip was of course furiously angry at what had happened, and had instructed his ambassador to demand justice. No news of Drake had reached England. There had been one report, that he had been taken by the Spaniards and hanged, another that his ship had gone to the bottom. Lord Burleigh hoped that either one or the other of these might be true. As for the Queen, she solemnly declared to the Spanish ambassador that she had had nothing to do with the expedition, and that when the pirate—for so the Spaniards called him—came home he would be severely punished. And now the “pirate” had come.

Drake had friends at Court, and they warned him to be on his guard. He refused to take his ship into Plymouth harbour, keeping her where, if need should be, she could escape. A week afterwards the Queen sent for him. He went, but did not go empty. He carried with him some of the best of his spoils. When he reached London he found that alarming news had come from Spain. King Philip had seized

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Portugal, and had landed some soldiers in Ireland. Burleigh and his friends were terribly frightened, but the Queen heard enough from Drake to give her fresh courage. He told her what he had done, and showed her how easily it might be done again.

The Spanish ambassador still called for justice, and the Queen spoke him fair. An account, she said, should be taken of the treasure brought home. His master should have what belonged to him. An account *was* taken, but Drake was allowed to take £10,000 out of it for himself. Then the *Golden Hind* was brought round from Plymouth to the Thames, and everybody in London flocked to see it. The Queen still answered the ambassador with excuses and promises, but she had made up her mind to stand by her bold servant. In April, 1581, she let everybody know it by going down to Deptford, where the *Golden Hind* had been hauled ashore, and making Drake a knight. His ship was to be preserved as a trophy.

Great schemes for carrying on the work which Drake had begun were made. But now the Queen hung back. The schemes would cost money, and she did not like spending it. They meant open war, and from open war she still shrank.

At last, in September, 1585, Drake was afloat again. He did damage at various places on the coast of

Spain, and then sailing to the West Indies, burnt three of the chief Spanish settlements. When he came home again England was in great danger, for King Philip had been steadily preparing fresh forces to subdue her. Drake was put in command of a squadron, with which he boldly sailed into the harbour of Cadiz. He burnt there, it was said, 10,000 tons of shipping,—this he called “singeing the King of Spain’s beard,”—afterwards sailing to the Azores to capture Philip’s own merchantman, the *San Filippe*, with a cargo worth a million of money. In my next chapter I shall have something more to say about Drake. For the present, all that remains to be told is, that he sailed in 1595 with another expedition, which was to act against Spain in the West Indies, and that he died on board his ship, off Portobello, on January 28, 1596.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PERFECT KNIGHT.

ENGLAND in the days of Queen Elizabeth was, we may say, full of great men. It was an age when great things had to be done, and men were found

ready to do them. If Philip Sidney, of whom I am going to say something in this chapter, does not stand in the front rank of Elizabeth's heroes, as they may be called, it was because his life was cut short. In all the company there was no one more noble.

Philip Sidney was born in the year in which Lady Jane Grey was beheaded ; he had his name " Philip," given him by way of compliment to the Queen's husband, Philip of Spain. His father, Henry Sidney, might very well, but for his prudence, have been brought to destruction in the Duke of Northumberland's attempt to set the Princess Mary aside and to put Lady Jane in her place. He had married the Duke's eldest daughter ; he had been the royal boy's closest companion, and he must have been present when the young King was persuaded to leave the crown away from his sisters. Indeed we are told that Edward died in his arms. He wisely took no part in the events that followed, but retired with his wife to his house at Penshurst in Kent. There on November 29, 1554, Philip was born. He was sent to Oxford before he was fifteen ; from Oxford he went to Cambridge ; when he was eighteen, having learnt, if we are to believe his biographers, everything that could be taught him in England, he began his travels in Europe. The first place at which he stopped was Paris, where the French King,

Charles IX., professed to be so much pleased with him, that he made him one of his gentlemen-in-waiting. Very soon afterwards took place the dreadful slaughter of the Protestants in Paris, known as the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.¹ Philip had a narrow escape, but saved his life by taking refuge in the house of the English ambassador, Sir Francis Walsingham. Walsingham's daughter Frances afterwards became his wife. After three years of travel he returned to England, and soon became one of the first favourites at Court. He was exceedingly handsome, and had most gracious manners; he was learned, he could speak the three chief languages of Europe, French, Spanish, and Italian; he was a good dancer and a fine musician, and he wrote verses which, then at least, every one admired. It was the fashion, as I have said, to flatter the Queen, and to speak of her as the wisest, the best, and the most beautiful of women. Philip Sidney did this, which seems to us rather absurd, very well, and the Queen, who at fifty was as vain as she could have been at fifteen, spoke of him as "her Philip." But the young man was a great deal more than a clever courtier. He was sent more than once as an ambassador to transact important business, and he did it with the utmost discretion. A man of twice his age could not have

¹ August 24, 1572.

been more prudent. It was truly said of him that "from a child he started into a man, without ever being a youth."

How wide was his reputation may be seen from the fact, that in 1585 he was named among the



GENTLEMAN AND HIS ATTENDANTS.

competitors for the crown of Poland. The Poles used to elect their own King, a plan which sounds reasonable enough, but actually worked very badly; for as the choice had to be unanimous, there was nothing for it but for the majority to put the minority

to death. Elizabeth did not like to lose the very finest gentleman about the Court ; perhaps she did not think the place was good enough for him ; possibly she was jealous of him. Anyhow she refused to let him compete for the honour.

In 1586 he joined the English army which Elizabeth sent in that year to help the Protestants of Holland against Philip II. The Low Countries, once the possession of the Dukes of Burgundy, now belonged to Spain, and the people had been fighting for many years for their liberty, especially the liberty to hold the Reformed faith. They were at this time in great straits. Philip had taken the city of Antwerp and conquered much of the country, and he had procured that the great leader of the Dutch, William of Orange, should be assassinated. Queen Elizabeth, who had before allowed her subjects to help the Dutch, now openly took their part ; she saw that she and they had a common enemy in Philip of Spain, and that if she allowed them to be destroyed the turn of England would come next. So she sent 7000 men under the command of the Earl of Leicester, who was son of Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, and so Philip Sidney's uncle. Sidney was already in the country, for in 1585 he had been sent as Governor to Flushing. In July of the next year he joined Maurice of Nassau in attacking the

Spaniards, and some weeks later the united forces of English and Dutch besieged the town of Zutphen in the province of Guelderland. The Spanish commander sent a convoy of provisions for the town, and a force of English cavalry was sent to intercept it. Philip Sidney with various young noblemen and gentlemen went with it as volunteers. It was a foggy morning, and for a time nothing could be seen, only the wheels of the waggons in which the provisions were carried could be heard. Then the sun came out, and the Englishmen saw that the convoy was well guarded. There were 3000 Spaniards in all, among them some of the best of the Spanish cavalry and spearmen. The Englishmen, overmatched as they were, did not hesitate for a moment. They charged the enemy, the young Earl of Essex leading them, broke through the lines of the Spaniards, and then, turning round, charged them again. Philip Sidney's horse was shot under him in this second charge. He mounted another and rode on. Meanwhile the convoy which they were trying to capture went on getting nearer and nearer to the town, for the English, with their scanty numbers, could not stop it. Then Sidney and his companions charged a third time, and this time he got as far as the town itself. Then he was hit by a musket-ball on the leg above the knee. Commonly this part would have

been protected by armour, but Sidney had put off his *cuisse*s, or thigh-pieces, because a companion, an older man than himself, had none to wear. The ball made a bad wound, breaking the bone of the thigh. Sidney rode back to camp, for he could no longer manage his horse in battle. As he went along, he asked for a drink of water. When it was given him, he saw, while raising it to his lips, a dying soldier who looked at the cup with eyes of longing. He handed the water to him with the words, "Thy necessity is greater than mine."

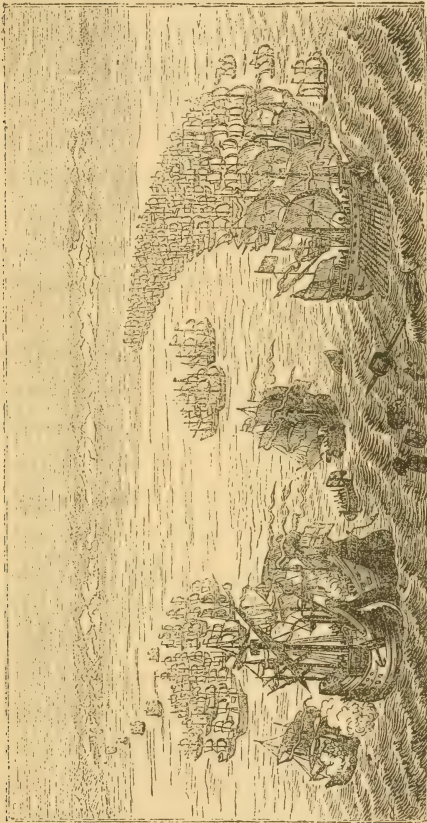
It was not thought at first that the wound was mortal. Very likely, had the surgeons of that day been as skilful in treating wounds as are the surgeons of ours, he might have lived. But this was not to be. He lingered for rather more than a fortnight, dying on October 17, 1586.

CHAPTER XX.

THE GREAT ARMADA.

KING PHILIP of Spain had long been waiting to make his great attempt on England. He had an old dislike for the country, which he knew did not love

him. And he had received many provocations, the



THE GREAT ARMADA.

plundering, for instance, of his towns and fleets described in ch. xviii., and now the help given to his

rebellious subjects in the Low Countries. I have already related how Drake pounced down upon his stores of ships and other things and destroyed them. Even then Elizabeth had hopes that the peace might be kept. She was still very sparing of her money, starving both her armies and her fleet. She did not want to believe that the Spaniards would come, and she persuaded herself, as people often can, to believe what she wished to be true. Even her ministers were deceived, and her ambassadors told that there was nothing to fear.

As a matter of fact there was very much to fear, and it is impossible to say what might have happened if Philip, on his part, had not been as disposed to delay as she was to disbelieve. He was waiting, he thought, till everything was quite ready, so that success would be quite certain; but he really was waiting, though he did not know it, till the moment of success had gone by for good. The Armada—so the great fleet that Philip had been slowly gathering together was called—was ready to sail at the beginning of May; it did not sail till the end of that month, and it was two months more before it came in sight of the English coast. There were 130 vessels, many of them very large, carrying more than 20,000 soldiers and a number of priests. Philip's plan was that the Armada should sail up the Channel till it reached

the coast of Flanders, where the Duke of Parma had collected an army of 60,000. This army, joined by the soldiers carried by the Armada itself, was to be taken across the Channel. If this could be done, there was nothing in England that could even pretend to meet it. Happily for us the plan broke down.

The English preparations were begun very late, but once begun they were made with plenty of zeal. The English navy did not number more than some thirty vessels, but the great cities furnished many more. The city of London was to have fitted out fifteen, and it sent thirty-three. There was the same zeal shown in other places. Seamen flocked in from all the coast, till at last there were nearly 200 vessels. They were smaller than the great Spanish ships, but they were well armed, well manned, and well commanded. It was no unequal match after all, though the Queen had put off making her preparations dangerously long. She had actually ordered the fleet to be dismantled at the very moment when the Armada was about to sail. Lord Howard, the chief admiral, happily refused to obey.

Drake was playing bowls with some of his fellow-captains on the Hoe at Plymouth when a small merchant vessel came into the harbour with news that the Spanish fleet had been sighted off the Lizard. The great seaman would not show any disturbance.

"There is time," he cried, "to finish the game, and to beat the Spaniards too!" Yet he knew that things were in bad plight. The English fleet was in harbour, and if the Spaniards found them still there, might easily be destroyed by fire-ships.¹ All night the officers and seamen were hard at work getting the ships out of harbour. This done they sailed westward along the coast, and in the afternoon of the next day sighted the Armada. It was coming up the Channel in the shape of a crescent, its huge ships bright with gilding and paint. It was not wholly made up of ships intended to fight. "Truly, I think, not half of them men-of-war," Drake wrote to the ministers in London. This being so the Spanish admiral did not mean to have a great sea-battle. He would sail on straight to where the army of Flanders lay, and then fight if necessary in carrying it across the Channel. On the other hand, the English were very anxious to have the battle, and the greater the better. If the Spaniards contrived to do what they wanted, and join their allies and countrymen in Flanders, things would be looking very badly for England. So they kept as close as they could to the rear of the Spanish

¹ A fire-ship is a vessel, generally old and of little value, which is filled with fuel, taken as near as possible to the fleet of the enemy, and then left by its crew in such a way that it is likely to get among them and set them on fire.

fleet, and tried to provoke the enemy into fighting. At last one of the great ships turned upon its pursuers. Drake, who was in front of the English, attacked it; others of the Spaniards came to its help. They suffered not a little from the English cannon, but none of them were sunk or taken. At night the Armada went on its way eastwards. Drake was for attacking; Lord Howard was for waiting till he could join the other English squadrons. Drake did his best to get his way by going against the chief commander's will, but did not succeed. Two of the great Spanish ships, however, fell into the hands of the English. This was on Monday, the first fighting having been on Sunday, July 31. On the Wednesday there was fighting again, the two fleets being now near Portland. The Spaniards were no match for their nimble enemies, and though they did not lose more than three ships, they began to feel very much out of heart. What was nearly being a great battle took place on the Thursday near the Isle of Wight, and if the weather had remained calm the English, who had much the best of the situation—in those days, before steam was used, it was everything to have the wind in one's favour—might have won a signal victory; but a strong breeze sprang up, and the Spaniards got out of their difficulties. On the Friday there was no fighting; on Saturday the Armada had reached Calais, and was within a few miles of its

journey's end. The Spanish army were at Dunkirk, some thirty miles away, and the Dutch ships, which had been blockading the harbour of that town, had been obliged to go away to get fresh stores.

Something had to be done, and done at once, and it was determined to try fire-ships. Eight vessels were picked out—there were no old and worthless ones to use, so good ships had to be sacrificed, and Drake offered his own—and sent down against the enemy. As fire-ships they failed, that is, they did not set any of the Spaniards on fire. Still they did what was wanted. The enemy, terribly frightened lest the fire-ships should come among them, cut their cables in haste and tried to escape. In a short time they were scattered, and then the English attacked. In vain did the admiral try to bring them back and form them into line. Drake and his fellow-captains, Hawkins and Frobisher, and others less famous, fell on them as they were, divided and unable to help each other. After a while Lord Howard, who had been engaged with one of the biggest Spaniards, came up, and the fight went on more fiercely than ever. Such fighting had never been seen before at sea. The English ships moved far more quickly than their foes, and they were far superior, as has been said, in their cannon, but the Spaniards, over-matched as they were, fought bravely on. At the end of the battle—it lasted for some nine hours, going

on until the morning of Tuesday, August 9—the Spaniards had lost twenty-four out of the forty ships which had been attacked. It seemed likely that the rest would be driven ashore, for the wind was blowing strongly from the north-west. Then at the last moment it suddenly changed to the south-west, and what remained of the Spanish ships were saved, at least for the time. They bore up to the north, and though Lord Howard and Drake and the other captains followed them for a while they never came within shot again. They had other reasons, too, for giving up the chase. The Queen had been sadly mean about furnishing the fleet with provisions, and some of the sailors actually died of want. And then the weather had broken up, and it was necessary, especially with ships which had been more or less damaged with fighting, to get into shelter.

But for the Spaniards there was no shelter, while, as they had no pilots, they knew nothing of the seas over which they were sailing. Some of the ships were driven on to the coast of Norway, and there perished. The commander of the Armada himself was wrecked on one of the Orkney Islands. Of those that managed to get through the stormy and dangerous seas of the North of Scotland many perished on the Irish coast. The people had no mercy on the strangers, though they were of the same faith, the Reformed doctrines having made no progress in

Ireland, but either killed them on the shore, or sent them as prisoners to England. They did not know or care what they were, but having first plundered them, either killed or made prisoners of them, just as they thought would be most profitable. Of the 134 ships that had left Spain only fifty-three returned; of the 30,000 soldiers and sailors, only a third part.

And what, we may ask, was Queen Elizabeth doing all this time? As soon as the Spanish fleet had been sighted, signals had been sent by fire throughout England, that all the soldiers should be mustered. The chief camp in the south of England was at Tilbury Fort, on the Essex shore of the Thames nearly opposite Gravesend. The Earl of Leicester was in command, and the Queen went down herself to review the army. We can hardly call it an army, for the men for the most part were not soldiers. Since the beginning of Elizabeth's reign there had been little fighting on land, and few of the men who assembled at Tilbury could have seen any service. They were full of zeal, however, and courage. Elizabeth rode through their ranks on a white horse, wearing a steel breast-plate, and holding in her hand the truncheon of a field-marshal. She made a speech to the army, of which the last words were these, "I know I have the body of a weak, feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a King of England."

Lord Leicester died on September 14.

CHAPTER XXI.

A FAVOURITE.

WE have heard how at Zutphen, where Sir Philip Sidney was, the charge was led by the young Earl of Essex. He was a gallant young fellow, hot-headed and foolish indeed, and extravagant, but yet with much that was good in him. Unhappily he was spoilt by bad friends; the Queen herself, with her changeable ways, now petting him, now showing herself displeased with him, did not do him any good. What was worst of all, he could not control his own temper.

At Zutphen he was only nineteen, only twenty therefore when, in the year after, the Queen put him in command of the cavalry at Tilbury Fort. She liked to have him in attendance on her, for he was handsome and clever, and with fine manners, though he was sometimes violent in speech and action, as when, for instance, he fought a duel with a rival courtier, a certain Sir Charles Blunt. Sir Charles wounded him in the knee. The Queen, hearing of it,

seemed rather pleased than offended. Essex, she said, needed some one to take him down, otherwise there would be no ruling him.

In the year after the Armada, when there was an expedition to help a certain Don Antonio, who hoped to take Portugal from King Philip, Essex ran away from Court to join the fleet. The Queen, who was much vexed, sent one Robert Carey after him with a letter, in which she said that "his sudden and undutiful departure from her presence and his place of attendance" was very offensive to her. Carey was not in time to catch him. He had already embarked. The expedition did nothing of any importance, for the Portuguese had no particular liking for Don Antonio, but Essex distinguished himself by his courage, being the first to leap ashore when there was a landing on the Spanish coast. This, however, was a fault which Elizabeth did not find it difficult to forgive. It was not so when she found that he had secretly married the widow of Sir Philip Sidney. She could not bear that any of her favourites should think of any one but herself. He was still in disgrace when some English soldiers were sent to help one of the French parties against the other. Again he secretly left the Court to have his share of the fighting. Of this indeed, he seemed never to have enough. He was foremost in every attack; his young brother Walter

was killed at his side. He challenged a French



THE EARL OF ESSEX.

Admiral to a duel; and he took up a position so much in advance of his general's line that he was in

great danger. The Queen did not like that he should risk his life in this way, and yet was proud of the courage which he showed. Still, as she refused to send the help which she had promised while he remained where he was, he thought it best to come home. Elizabeth gave him a hearty welcome, and seemed to forgive him for all his offences against her. In 1596 he commanded the army in an expedition against Spain, and took the town of Cadiz in a very gallant way. The Queen, however, was angry with him for allowing the soldiers to have the plunder of the place; she thought that it ought to have been kept for her, or, at least, for her to divide as she thought best. Again Essex lost her favour, but he seems to have got it again the next year, when she made him Earl Marshal. In 1598 Lord Burleigh died; the Queen missed him much, and so did Essex. The two had been often at variance. Burleigh was for peace with Spain, if it were possible, and Essex for war. Once, it is said, when they had grown hot disputing this question, Burleigh drew a Prayer-book out of his pocket and showed the young man this text—"Bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days." But Burleigh had a great regard for him, and often served him with the Queen. Most of the courtiers looked at him with jealousy and even hatred.

In 1598 there came the worst quarrel of all, if indeed the story is true. There was a dispute as to the proper person to be put in some office in Ireland. The Queen set herself against the man whom Essex recommended, and at last he became so angry that he turned his back upon her. This piece of rudeness so provoked her that she gave him a box on the ear. He put his hand to his sword, and when the Lord Admiral stepped between him and the Queen, he declared that he would not have put up with such an insult from Henry VIII. himself, and left the Court in a furious rage. Again, however, he was received with favour, or what seemed like it. In 1599 he was sent to Ireland as Lord Deputy. Of course it was an honour, but a very dangerous one. The country was most difficult to manage, and certainly wanted more prudence and good temper in its ruler than Essex had ever shown.

In Ireland everything went wrong. Essex was as brave as a man could be, but he was not a general. He could not defeat the Irish rebels; perhaps no one could have done so. Accordingly he tried to make peace, and sent over to England the terms which he thought ought to be given. The Queen and her counsellors were furious, thinking them far too good for the Irish. No one now can say who was in the right. Ireland, after all, did belong to the Irish, and

they asked only for what had been their own. But then there were many English settlers in the country, and there would have been an end of them if the Irish had prevailed.

Essex's enemies, of course, were busy. They even said that Essex was thinking of becoming King of Ireland by help of the rebel Irish and of Spain. The Queen sent him an angry letter, and he, on receiving it, left Ireland at once, in order, as he said, to see the Queen, and defend himself before her from the slander of his enemies. When he got to London he found that she was not there, but at her palace at Cheam, called Nonsuch. He hurried down there, and almost forced his way into the Queen's chamber. She had not long risen from her bed, and was being dressed by her women. He fell on his knees before her, and covered her hand with kisses. She seems to have been kind to him, though no one knew what she said. Anyhow, when he left the room, he seemed to be content with the way in which she had received him, and was in good spirits. But afterwards she turned, or was turned by others, against him, and when a gentleman whom he had knighted came to pay her his respects, she showed a great deal of anger. "I am no Queen," she cried. "That man sets himself above me. Who gave him command to come hither so soon, when I sent him on other

business?" Later in the day he saw her again, but then she showed him no kind of favour, told him that he must not leave his house, and that he would have to answer for his conduct before the Council.

All this happened in the winter of 1599. About six months afterwards he was tried in an irregular sort of way. He confessed that he had made great mistakes in the conduct of the war, but solemnly affirmed that he had never had any treason against the Queen in his thoughts. In the end she pardoned him, but gave him to understand that he was not yet restored to favour.

If he had been content to be patient all might have ended well. But patient he never was and never could be. He saw that his enemies were powerful with the Queen, and that they persuaded her to do what they pleased. He was honestly convinced that many things which they did were not for the good of the country, and that if he were in their place, he could give better advice. Then he was greatly in debt, and was very angry to find that he was not to have any longer a very profitable monopoly, as it was called. A *monopoly* was the privilege of selling something which other people were not allowed to sell. Of course any one who had the privilege could raise the price, not exactly as high as he chose, but so high as to make large profits. Essex's monopoly

was of a kind of wine. He grew more and more angry and discontented, and began to talk in a very violent way, saying, for instance, "that the Queen grew old and cankered, and that her mind was become as crooked as her carcase."

At last he broke out into open violence. He had been called to attend the Council, and had answered that he was not well enough to come. The Lord Chief Justice and some other great persons came to warn him not to break the law. He brought them into his house, and locked them up. This done, he went out into the street, followed by a number of friends, in the hope that the citizens would rise in his favour. The streets were empty, for the Lord Mayor had ordered that every one was to remain at home. One of the sheriffs, whom he knew to be his friend, he could not find. Sadly disappointed, he went back to his house, and found that his prisoners were gone.

Meanwhile the heralds had been sent into the city to proclaim Essex a traitor, to offer a reward of £1000 for his head, and pardon to such of his fellows as should at once make their peace with the Queen. Soon afterwards Essex's house was surrounded by soldiers ; on the promise of a fair trial he surrendered, and was taken to the Tower.

The trial took place before a number of peers, some of whom were certainly Essex's enemies. He was

not allowed to object to them, because they were not sworn, but gave their verdict on their honour. I need not describe the trial. He was of course found guilty, and indeed he had done much more than had been enough to bring about the condemnation of others. No one doubted that he would be sentenced to death ; the question was whether the Queen would suffer him to die. For some time she could not make up her mind. Essex's enemies did their best to keep up her anger against him. They repeated, perhaps they made up, foolish things that he had said against her. But she could not forget that she had once loved him. There is a story, which has been denied, but which is probably true, that in former days she had given him a ring which he was to send to her when he was in great need. She expected to receive it, and he did send it. It went by mistake to the wrong person, and this person wilfully kept it back. The Queen was provoked that it never reached her, and the fierce temper which belonged to her family was roused to a worse rage than ever. Essex was found guilty on the 19th of February. the Queen signed his death warrant on the 23rd, and he was executed two days later.

It was a cruel act, because it was not in any way necessary. The Queen could not have believed that she was in any danger from him. It was not long

before she began to reproach herself. After all she had loved the man, and when he was gone she began to find it out. She had many sad thoughts when she died, but none more sad than the memory of the foolish, brave Essex. She died on March 24, 1603, in her seventieth year.

CHAPTER XXII.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

IF I had followed strictly the order of dates I should have written about Walter Raleigh before I wrote about the Earl of Essex or even about Philip Sidney ; for he was two years older than Sidney, and fifteen years older than Essex. But it is more convenient to put his story here. Raleigh had to wait much longer than the other two before he began to rise in the world. He fought and fought bravely in France, in the Low Countries, and in Ireland, but he was still nothing more than a private gentleman at thirty, though Essex, as we have seen, commanded the English cavalry when he was but twenty. Then



SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

came Raleigh's chance. There is no reason to suppose that the story is not true, though we do not find it in print till more than thirty years after his death. It is very like what we might expect from him and from the Queen.

Elizabeth—it is thus the story goes—had to pass over some muddy spot, and stopped a moment in doubt. Raleigh, who was wearing that day a new plush cloak, at once stripped it off his shoulders and threw it down in front of the Queen. She passed on, not forgetting to notice the young man who had been so ready with his politeness. Not long afterwards he wrote on a window where he knew the Queen would see it this line—

“Fain would I climb, yet fear I to fall.”

Elizabeth added underneath—

“If thy heart fail thee, climb not at all.”

Raleigh took the hint, and climbed. He got up quickly enough. Of wealth he had plenty. The Queen gave him money and lands, not indeed of her own—of them she was very sparing—but belonging to other people. For instance, she made a college or a bishop grant him the lease of an estate at a very low rent; he could let it again, and take the difference. When Antony Babington was found guilty of plotting against the Queen, part of his property was

handed over to Raleigh. Then he had monopolies of wine and cloth. Finally, though he did not get much profit out of them, he had lands in Ireland.

If he got money quickly, he spent it freely. We read of a gentleman being tried for stealing a hat-band of pearls belonging to "Walter Rawley"—his name was spelt in twenty different ways—worth £30. This indeed is nothing compared to other stories told about him. One writer of the time says that he wore £6000 worth of jewels in his shoes. There is a tradition that he had a court dress that cost £60,000. But he did not spend all his money in this foolish way. He would gladly have done as Drake did, and gone voyaging himself in those "Western Seas," where the Englishmen of that day were so fond of seeking for riches and fame. But the Queen would not let him go. So he fitted out ships, and sent others to seek adventure and profit in his stead. Two started in April, 1584, and five months afterwards came back with some fine pearls and furs and other things, together with two natives. The land they discovered was called "Virginia,"¹ after the Virgin Queen. It was Elizabeth herself who invented the name. Other expeditions were sent out and were not so successful. In fact they all failed,

¹ It was not the region now called Virginia in the United States, but part of North Carolina.

and it seemed as if all the lives and the money that were spent in them had been thrown away. But it was not so ; he set an example, and at last, and that in Raleigh's lifetime (1606), the colony was really founded.

When there was fighting to be done Raleigh was, as we may suppose, ready enough to take his share, and he fought as gallantly as any man in the battles with the Armada. In 1592 he got into trouble. The cause was the same as that which again and again made Elizabeth angry with her favourites. He presumed to love some one else. She sent him to the Tower. He was not kept there very long. In September the privateers which he and others had fitted out to take Spanish shipping brought home a splendid prize, the "Great Crown of Portugal Carack," as it was called, named the *Madre di Dios*. She had a most valuable cargo of spices, ebony, tapestries, silks, and all manner of precious things. The pepper alone was reckoned to be worth £102,000. Raleigh was let out of prison, that he might help in dividing the spoil, about which there was, as usual, a great deal of quarrelling.

In 1595 he actually did what he had often been thinking of—sailed for the Western Seas. Just six weeks—not a long time in those days—took him across the Atlantic. He reached Trinidad, burnt

down a newly-built Spanish city, and then with a couple of boats made his way up the Orinoco. He had various adventures and saw many curious things, which are good to read about, but of which I cannot write in this place. One of his experiences was to make a friendship with an old chief one hundred and ten years of age. He did not gather much treasure, but he made sure that the land which he had found was full of gold and silver, and he fully intended to visit it again. One thing that pleased him, and that we are glad to read, was that he was on quite friendly terms with the natives. In August he was back in England. He did not bring back a great store of treasure; without that, discovery was not much thought of in those days. People too laughed at his traveller's tales, but we know now that there was a great deal of truth in them, and that when he says a thing as of his own knowledge he is to be believed. He did not stop long at home. In the June of the following year (1596) he was with Lord Essex in the taking of Cadiz. He was wounded badly in the leg during the sea-fight, in which indeed he thrust his ship into the very foremost place. This wound prevented him from being at the plunder of the town. He complained that his part of the spoil was "a lame leg and deformed"; . . . that while others were enriched he had "nought but poverty and pain."

He had, as a fact, nearly £2000, which would be equal to about seven times as much in our time. But then the heroes of that day were almost as greedy as they were brave.

I shall pass quickly over the rest of the time between this and the Queen's death. Raleigh was now again in favour with her ; as he rose, Essex fell ; who was right, who was wrong in the lamentable quarrel between them we need not ask. When Essex died, Raleigh was there. Some one says that he came unasked ; but then he was Captain of the Guard, and it was probably his duty to be present.

With the Queen's life Raleigh's good fortune came to an end. King James did not like him, why it is not easy to say, except that the favourites of one sovereign seldom please his successor. All monopolies were recalled—a good thing, except that they would soon be given again to other people. This greatly reduced Raleigh's income. Then his place of Captain of the Guard was taken from him. He still used to come to Court, but it was made quite clear that he was not welcome. In July he was arrested, kept at first in his own home, and then sent to the Tower. The charge against him was, of course, high treason, in that he had plotted to put Arabella Stuart on the throne. This lady was the granddaughter of Margaret Tudor, sister of Henry VIII., and so of royal

descent. Elizabeth, who did not like James, had sometimes talked of naming her as her successor. Nothing like real proof of this accusation was brought forward. It is likely that there had been some such plot, and Raleigh may have talked foolishly, but that was all.

At the last moment his life was spared. This was in December, 1603. For more than twelve years, that is, up to March, 1616, he was kept in prison. There was one person at least who wondered that such a thing could be done. This was Prince Henry, the King's eldest son. "Who but my father," he said, "would keep such a bird in a cage?" The Prince even made his father promise to release him. But he died, and for a time Raleigh's hopes were at an end.

At last he got his liberty. He was to go again to the country which he had visited twenty years before, and get possession for the King and his courtiers of some of the riches which he had seen there. But he was not pardoned. That was to depend upon whether he succeeded or not. He did not succeed. Everything seemed to go against him. He met with storms on his way. When he reached Guiana he himself fell sick of a fever, and was very near to death. Then he started for the great gold mine, where he hoped to find the wealth for which he was seeking. But the

Spaniards were prepared for his coming. They thought that he had no business in the New World, believing that it all belonged to them. A battle followed, and Raleigh's son Walter was killed. As for the mine, they never reached it. If they had, they certainly would not have found what they expected. You do not find gold lying in a mine, as it lies in the drawer of a bank, and something of this was what they hoped to see. All that they did get was the plunder of a Spanish town, worth some £1000. Really it was worth far less than nothing to Raleigh, for King James desired above all things to be good friends with Spain, and here he had sent a prisoner out of the Tower to burn one of the King of Spain's towns!

There is no need to say much more. A few days after he got back to England he was thrown into the Tower. He had had no pardon for the crime of which he had been found guilty before, and new charges were brought against him. There was a sort of trial. But long before the King had made up his mind to kill him. And kill him he did. On the morning of Friday, October 29, 1618, Walter Raleigh was beheaded.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A LITTLE ROMANCE.

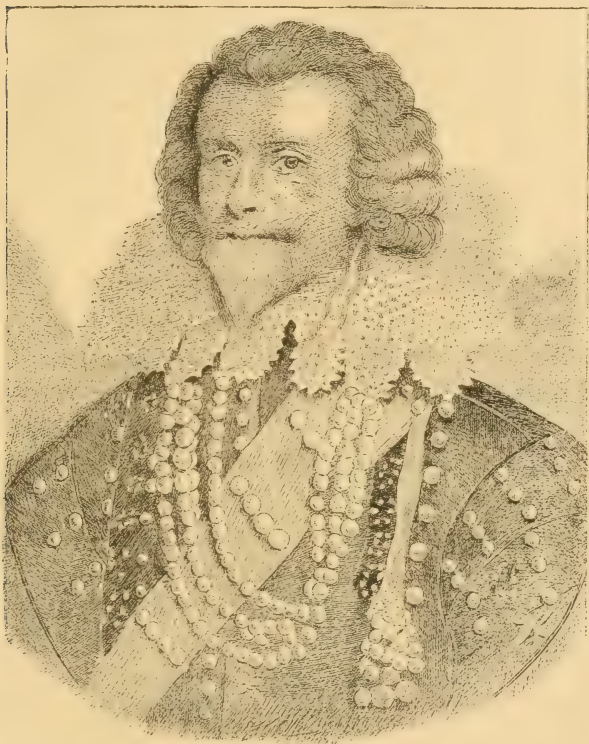
KING JAMES had not, indeed, an excuse, but a reason for putting Raleigh to death, in this, that he greatly desired to be on friendly terms with Spain. It makes one quite ashamed to see how an English King disgraced himself. As soon as the English ambassador at Madrid heard that Raleigh had been beheaded, he hurried to tell the King, who, he wrote back, "showed much contentment with the hearing." One of the English ministers wrote to the ambassador, telling him to make as much as he could out of the matter. He was to let King Philip¹ understand that James had caused Sir Walter Raleigh to be put to death chiefly to give him satisfaction; he was to dwell on what a very clever man Raleigh was, and how much he might have done for his King and country, and so prove to the Spanish King that he ought to be very grateful. What could be more shameful than that a King of England should make a merit

¹ Philip III., son of Philip II., who died in 1598.

with a foreign ruler of having put to death one of his most useful subjects simply to please him? The King of Spain wrote him a letter of thanks with his own hand, and that was all the payment he got. But he hoped to get much more, especially one thing on which he had set his heart. What this was I shall now show.

King James' eldest son, Prince Henry, died in 1612. Some five years afterwards it was thought well to look about for a wife for Prince Charles (born 1600), who was now heir to the throne. James would have liked a Spanish better than a French princess, but the Spanish King, Philip III., never liked the idea, and no wonder, for the last Spanish princess that had come to England, Katharine of Aragon, had been very unhappy. But Philip III. died in 1621, and his son, Philip IV., seemed more favourably disposed. Indeed, an agreement was come to that Charles should marry the Infanta Maria, sister of the King. She was to be at liberty to worship God in the way to which she was accustomed. James also promised that the Roman Catholics in England should not be persecuted any more. If they gave assurance of their being loyal subjects, they were to be let alone. But then difficulties began to arise. There was a dispute about the dowry which the Infanta was to have when she was married, and another about the time of the

marriage. The Spaniards too, backed up by the Pope, wanted to secure better terms for the Roman



THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

Catholics in England ; King James, who had already given great offence to his subjects by what he had

done, was unwilling to do any more. Another thing about which they differed was, what was to be done with a certain Frederick, a German Prince, who had married the King's daughter Elizabeth. He was the sovereign of certain provinces on the Rhine, and had been elected King of Bohemia, but had lost that kingdom and his own possessions. James hoped to get the Spaniards to restore them to him.

And now some one suggested the idea that Prince Charles should go himself to Madrid. He might see the Infanta, and perhaps settle the matters in dispute with her brother. It has been said that the idea first came from the Spanish ambassador. But the man that had most to do with it was a certain George Villiers, younger son of a country knight, who had become a great favourite with both the king and the Prince, and had by this time been made Marquis of Buckingham. It was not very easy to get the King's consent. He was afraid, he said, that he should lose "Baby Charles"—this was his pet name for his son. At last he gave way, and the two young men—Buckingham was just eight years older than the Prince—started on their journey, calling themselves Mr. Smith and Mr. Brown. They went by way of Paris, and saw the Royal family, among them the Queen, who was the sister of the Queen of Spain, and Henrietta Maria, whom he was afterwards to

marry. In France the proposed marriage was not liked—nor, indeed, was it in England—and the travellers were warned that they had better hurry on, lest they should be arrested. They got safely across the frontier, and reached Madrid without any mishap. They went to the Ambassador, who was not a little surprised to see them. Charles was introduced to the King, and the two were very friendly. But for the present, he was told it was not possible that he should be allowed to speak to or even come near the Infanta. But he could see her when she was taken out for a drive.

Then there came an entry in state. Charles rode at the King's right-hand, with a canopy held over his head. At the palace he made what we may say was a "call" on the Royal family. The King and the Queen were there, the two brothers of the King, and the Infanta. But they had to talk through an interpreter, for the Spanish royalties never spoke any language but their own, at least in public. When Charles did manage to get a few words in French with the Queen, she told him that he would not be allowed to marry the Infanta, and that he had better give up the idea, and think of her sister Henrietta, whom he had seen in Paris.

Charles, however, was not going to own himself beaten. He determined to see the Infanta a little

closer, and finding out that she used to go in the early morning to a certain orchard, scrambled over the wall and presented himself before her. Both she and her attendants were terribly frightened, and the Prince found that he had come to no purpose.

In the end nothing came of the treaties and the courtship. It was a bit of romance and nothing more. The Pope, whose leave was wanted before the marriage could take place, asked more than King James was willing to grant, in the way of giving religious liberty to the Roman Catholics. King James, on the other hand, demanded that Spain should help the husband of his daughter Elizabeth, the Elector Frederick, who was a Protestant, to get back his dominions. King Philip refused to do this, and thought it an insult that he should have been asked. In the end the affair was broken off. Prince Charles and his Spanish hosts parted on what seemed to be very good terms. He gave them some handsome presents, among them a diamond ornament for the Infanta, and received as much or more from them. Several of the Spanish grandees accompanied him to the ship when he embarked, and soon afterwards he landed at Portsmouth, to the joy of his countrymen. But really there was much angry feeling on both sides. The Duke of Buckingham, especially, was greatly offended, and is said to have told the Spanish Minister

that he would be even with him. The nation was greatly relieved to find that there was to be no Spanish match, and urged the King to declare war with Spain. Buckingham became a popular favourite ; and there were bonfires and rejoicings when the King unwillingly consented. The House of Commons voted the sum of £300,000 for carrying it on. The very next year war with Spain was declared, and the year after James died.

CHAPTER XXIV.

KING OR PARLIAMENT?

IT would take very long, and would bring us into a number of very difficult subjects, to explain the causes of what is commonly called "The Great Rebellion," the war between the Parliament and the King. King James, and King Charles after him, tried to rule more absolutely than the English people were willing to endure. Elizabeth, it is true, was always fond of having her own way, but she knew when she

had to yield. This was exactly what King Charles did not know. This was one cause of his troubles ; another was the bad advisers whom he had about him.

The worst of these was his wife, Queen Henrietta Maria. I have already described how he courted a Spanish princess, and how the match was broken off. On his way to Spain he had passed through Paris. When the Princess Henrietta, youngest daughter of King Henry IV., heard the story of his adventures, she said, "The Prince of Wales need not have gone so far as Madrid to look for a wife." The Queen of Spain herself, another daughter of King Henry's had told him that he had better think of her sister Henrietta. This time the Prince did not go courting in person. He sent his portrait, and King James his father sent ambassadors. The Princess was very much pleased with the likeness, and the ambassadors made an agreement by which too much was yielded. So the Princess became Charles's wife, and, as I have said, proved to be a very bad adviser.

His other counsellors were not much wiser. These were more honest men than those whom King James had about him, but they were more unpopular. Foremost among these was Archbishop Laud, a learned and pious man indeed, but who offended many people both by his conduct and his opinions.

The worst piece of advice given to the King—and



CHARLES I. AND ARMOUR BEARER.

it was all the more harmful because it fell in with his own ways of thinking—was that he should try to

govern without a Parliament. Three Parliaments were called together during the years 1625—1629, and quickly dissolved, because they would not do what the King wished. Then for eleven years, 1629—1640, there was no Parliament, the King raising money by ways that were against law, or, if not actually against law, had been out of use for so long that they seemed to be so. In 1640 the Parliament called the Long Parliament met. Some things that it did were right and necessary, some were doubtful, some clearly beyond its powers. Very likely it would have been more moderate than it was if the King could have been trusted to keep his word. Unfortunately he could not. Anyhow, things went on from bad to worse. It was on August 22, 1642, that the war began. On that day the King set up his standard at Nottingham.

At first the Royalists, as the King's party are commonly called, were stronger than their adversaries. The larger part of England was with them. We may say that every town and every village was divided; even in families there were some that took one side while others took the other; but generally the west of England took the King's part and the east took the Parliament's. A recent writer says, "Roughly speaking, a line drawn from Hull to Weymouth would divide England into a large Royalist half, and a

smaller Parliamentary half, as things were just after the war had begun. The extreme north was for the King, but Lancashire favoured the Parliament." London was for the Parliament, and had a great deal to do with its final success. It must be remembered that there was no regular army, and that only few Englishmen had had any experience of soldiering. Some had taken service with foreign princes or countries. Most of these were on the Royalist side, and generally King Charles's men were better suited for soldiers than their adversaries. In one thing they were certainly superior, they knew better how to ride, for most of the latter came from the towns. On the other hand, the then London militia, or "train-bands" as they were called, had some discipline and practice in arms.

The most experienced general on either side was Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, son of the Earl of Essex who was put to death by Elizabeth. He had seen a good deal of service on the Continent. He fought for the Parliament, yet after all he did not distinguish himself very much. On the Royalist side the best was the King himself, and the worst, that is the one who did most harm, Prince Rupert, the King's nephew (he was the son of his sister Elizabeth). He was brave—no one could have been braver—but he was hot-headed, and had no power of seeing the whole of a battle. While he was pushing his own

success he would let everything go wrong elsewhere. The man who really won the victory in the end for the Parliament was Oliver Cromwell. And now for a short description of the war.

From Nottingham the King moved westward to Shrewsbury, where his party was very strong. Having enlisted many soldiers he marched towards London. Lord Essex was waiting for him at Worcester, but the King avoided him, and he had to follow on as quickly as he could. At Edgehill, one of a range of hills that divide Warwickshire from Oxfordshire, the two armies met. What happened then was to happen again and again during the war. The King's cavalry was nearly as strong in numbers as his infantry, and far stronger in fighting power. Prince Rupert with his horsemen charged Lord Essex's cavalry and easily broke them. Carried away by excitement, he pursued the flying enemy for miles, and then came back to find that the King's infantry had been defeated, losing the Royal Standard and all the artillery. Some of Essex's cavalry under Oliver Cromwell, who now distinguished himself for the first time, had kept their order, and had made themselves useful in pursuing Charles's beaten infantry. On the whole, however, the Royalists had the best of the day, for the King was able to march towards London. Essex did the same, and though he was

obliged to take a longer course, got there before him. At Turnham Green, some six miles to the west of London, the City train-bands were guarding some earthworks. The King did not venture to attack them, and drew back to Reading, and afterwards to Oxford.

The conflict at Edgehill was the only pitched battle of the year, but there was a good deal of fighting elsewhere. The Parliament showed itself strong in the east, the Royalists prevailed in the north and west.

In June, 1643, the Parliament lost one of its best and ablest leaders. John Hampden was mortally wounded in a skirmish with some Royalist horse that had come out of Oxford, where the King had fixed his head-quarters. He died six days afterwards. In July the Royalists won two victories in Wiltshire, and on the 26th of that month they got possession of Bristol, after London the largest town in the kingdom. A little later the King laid siege to Gloucester. At this time (August, 1643) he was probably stronger than he ever was again.

The Parliament felt that they must not lose Gloucester, which was a very important place, on account of the bridge over the Severn, and Lord Essex was ordered to march to its relief. When he approached the King raised the siege, but posted himself so as to intercept the Earl on his way back to London. A

battle was fought at Newbury in Berkshire. In this the London train-bands distinguished themselves, standing firm against the fiercest charges of Rupert's cavalry. The King was not exactly defeated, but finding that his army was short of gunpowder, he left his position in the night, and made his way to Oxford. For the rest of the year there was no fighting of importance.

Both parties now began to look for help elsewhere. The Parliament applied to the Scotch. There were many skilful and experienced soldiers, men who had served in the wars on the continent, among the Scotch, and their help therefore was very valuable. The King, on the other hand, sent over to Ireland for the troops that had been fighting with the rebels there. It was even arranged that some of the rebels themselves should come. As it turned out, the Irish did more harm than good. Their coming made the English people very angry, and they were soon defeated. But when the Scotch joined the army of the Parliament things went very differently. The Royalists in the north could make no head against them, and the Earl of Newcastle, who was in command of them, sent to the King for help. Charles sent his nephew, Prince Rupert, with a large force of cavalry, and the two armies met on July 2nd, at Marston Moor, near York. There were about 27,000 men on

the side of the Parliament, while the King's army numbered about 3000 less. As was always the custom in those days, both sides had their infantry in the middle of the line, their cavalry on the two wings. And now there happened what had never happened before. Prince Rupert's cavalry charged, but charged in vain ; for a few minutes indeed their adversaries wavered, but it was only for a few minutes. They had some Scottish infantry to support them, and in a very short time they recovered their ground, and drove Rupert and his men before them. Here again Cromwell distinguished himself; it was he who was in command of the Parliament horse. From this time there could be no doubt as to what the end of the war would be. The King's strength was in his cavalry, and when they were beaten his cause was really lost. In another part of the field things went differently. Lord Goring charged Sir Thomas Fairfax, and broke his line. As usual, the Royalists pursued the enemy too far, without thinking of helping their friends. When they came back to the field, they found that the battle was lost. The King's army was indeed quite broken up. Prince Rupert managed to get a few thousand men together, but all the north of England was now in the power of the Parliament.

Still the war was not over. The King marched out

of Oxford, following Lord Essex, who had gone in hopes of bringing over the south-western counties to the cause of the Parliament. Essex was driven into Cornwall, and in the end lost the greater part of his army. Another battle, in which neither side gained much advantage, was fought at Newbury. This was on October 17. During the rest of the year 1644 nothing of importance happened.

On June 14 in the next year came the last battle of the war. It was fought at Naseby in Northamptonshire. Again Prince Rupert, who seems to have always lost his head as soon as he drew his sword charged the opposite line, broke it, and pursued the fugitives. He even began to plunder the baggage. When he came back the battle was lost. Cromwell with his "Ironsides," as the horsemen whom he had himself trained were called, defeated the Royalist cavalry, and then fell upon the infantry. When these began to waver, the King, who was close by, made ready to charge at the head of his own body-guard. Those who were with him would not allow it. Lord Carnwath, a Scotch nobleman, who was riding by his side, laid his hand upon his rein, saying, "Sire, would you go to your death?" And Charles unwillingly turned back. Perhaps it would have been better for him and for England if he had gone on, even though it was to his death.

Nothing was now left to the King but a few towns in various parts of England, where his garrisons still held out. He himself was at Oxford. But it soon became manifest that Oxford was not a safe place for him to live in. The Generals of the Parliament prepared to besiege it, and the King saw that if he did not wish to be made a prisoner he must go.

On April 27 he rode out of the city with two companions, one of them a clergyman, who, like many clergymen in those days, had turned himself into a soldier, the other a gentleman whose servant the King pretended to be. He wore indeed a servant's dress, and had his hair cut short in the fashion followed by those who followed the side of the Parliament. The party began by riding towards London, and got as far as Harrow-on-the-Hill. The King, it is said, had thoughts of entering the city and throwing himself on the mercy of his adversaries. But having got so far he changed his mind, and rode northward till he came to Newark, where the Scottish army was encamped. There he gave himself up. He knew that there were matters in dispute between the Scotch and the Parliament, and he hoped to turn these to his own advantage. But he was disappointed. The Scotch began by demanding terms which the King could not possibly yield. They wanted him to change the order of the Church ; there were to be no

more bishops. The King was quite firm. On this the Scotch determined to surrender him to the Parliament. They bargained that if they did this they were to have their arrears of pay, £400,000, paid them. Many people said that they had sold their King. And indeed what they did was something like it. He was actually given up on January 30, 1647; two years afterwards he was dead. The Queen, whose youngest child, named Henrietta after her, was born in Exeter in June, 1644, fled from that city a fortnight after the birth of her baby, made her way to Falmouth, and thence crossed over to France. Her vessel was nearly taken by an English cruiser. The Queen commanded the captain to blow up his ship sooner than let it fall into the hands of the enemy. But just at the last moment—a shell had already struck the vessel—a French squadron came in sight, and the cruiser gave up the pursuit. Even then she was not safe. A gale sprang up, scattered the squadron, and drove the Queen's vessel on to the rocks. The passengers, however, escaped to land without injury.

The baby had been left behind. There is an interesting story of how, two years afterwards, she was brought to her mother in France by the lady into whose charge she had been given. The Parliament resolved to take her away from this lady—she

was the wife of Lord Dalkeith,—and the faithful woman, sooner than suffer this, made up her mind to escape with the child. She dressed herself up in a shabby cloak and gown, made herself look deformed by fastening a hump of rags on one shoulder, and put a ragged suit of boy's clothes on the little Princess. She walked all the way from Oatlands, which is about twenty-five miles from London, to Dover, carrying the child on her back. The chief danger of being discovered came from the little Princess herself. She did not like the shabby dress which she wore, nor the name of Pierre by which she was called, and she told every one whom they met on the road that she was not Pierre, but a princess, and these dirty rags were not her own clothes. Fortunately no one understood her baby talk, and the party reached France safely.

CHAPTER XXV.

IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

THERE were two parties among those who were on the side of the Parliament. Some hoped that the King might be compelled to rule better ; others were

resolved to get rid of kings altogether, and now came the time for the latter to prevail. We shall see this from what happened on December 5, 1648: There had been now for nearly two years, ever since the Scotch gave Charles up to the Parliament, many letters passing backwards and forwards, and many conferences, between the Parliament and the King. At last, on the day mentioned above, the House of Commons, after a debate which lasted all the night, resolved that "the King's concessions to the Parliament are a sufficient ground for settling the peace of the kingdom." But this did not suit the views of Cromwell and the other leaders of the army. They sent down soldiers the next day to take possession of the way into the House. These soldiers were under the command of a certain Colonel Pride. He had a list of members who were known to favour the King, and as any of these came up to the House, he was seized by the soldiers and led away. This business was called "Pride's Purge." The House of Commons was "purged," as Cromwell and his friends said, of those who were not really in earnest.

About three weeks afterwards the House, or what was left of it, resolved that as "Charles Stuart had acted contrary to his trust in setting up his standard, he should be tried." On January 1 it voted that Charles Stuart had been guilty of high treason,



TRIAL OF CHARLES I. IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

and on the 19th of the same month the judges that were to try him were called together. More than a hundred judges had been named, but many of them did not come. When the name of Lord Fairfax was called, a voice from the gallery called out, "He has more wit than to be here ;" and when afterwards the clerk said, "By the authority of Parliament, and of all the good people of England," it cried again, "No, nor the hundredth part of them."

The next day the King was brought before the judges, who sat in hat and cloak. A chair of crimson velvet was put for him ; he sat down without removing his hat. The accusation that he had brought great troubles upon the kingdom was then read. When one of the lawyers was about to speak, the King laid his staff gently on his shoulder, as if to bid him be silent. He did it again, and the gold head of the staff dropped off. The King was seen to grow pale.

"You are expected," said the President, "to make an answer to this charge."

KING. "By what authority am I brought here ?"

PRESIDENT. "By authority of the people of England, whose elected King you are."

K. "The Monarchy of England has been for nigh two thousand years by inheritance, not by election."

P. "'Tis well known that you have misused this trust. The court must proceed."

K. "I have been brought here by force. This is no Parliament, for I see no House of Lords ; nor can there be a Parliament without a King."

This was repeated many times, the President requiring that the King should plead, the King refusing. As he walked out of the court some shouted "God save the King!" others "Justice! Justice!"

The same thing happened on the second and two following days. On the fifth the trial went on. Witnesses were called to testify that the King had set up his standard, and that various acts of war had been committed by him. The sixth day was occupied in the same way. On the seventh the King, on coming in, demanded to be heard. The President, answering that he should be allowed to speak before sentence was pronounced, went on to say that the Court was agreed that the charges brought against Charles Stuart had been proved. This done, he said to the King, "If you question our right to try you, we will not hear you ; but if you desire to defend yourself, then you may speak."

The King said that he had something to say to the Lords and Commons, and desired that he might be allowed to speak to them. His judges, of course,

he refused, as before, to acknowledge. The President would not allow what he asked, and proceeded to give sentence. "The Court adjudge that Charles Stuart, as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and a public enemy, shall be put to death by the severing of the head from the body."

K. "Will you hear me a word?"

P. "Sir, you are not to be heard after sentence."

K. "No, sir?"

P. "No, sir; by your favour, sir. Guard, withdraw your prisoner."

K. "By your favour, sir, hold the sentence."

Then, finding it all useless, he cried, "I am not suffered to speak. Expect what justice others will have."

Some of the soldiers as he passed them treated him rudely, blowing the smoke from their pipes in his face. This was not, however, the temper of all. One soldier cried "God bless the King!" his officer struck him with a cane. The King said, "Methinks that the punishment is greater than the offence."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE WINDOW IN WHITEHALL.

THE King was condemned on January 27. On the 29th he took leave of the two of his children that were in England—the Princess Elizabeth, who was then thirteen years old, and the Duke of Gloucester, who was but eight. There had been some talk of making the boy King, so that the chiefs of the Parliament might rule in his name (his two elder brothers were not in England). Charles took the child on his knee, and said to him, “Sweetheart, now will they cut off thy father’s head.” The boy looked at him very earnestly. He went on, “Heed, my child, what I say; they will cut off my head, and perhaps make thee a king. But mark what I say: you must not be a king so long as your brothers Charles and James live; therefore I charge you, do not be made a king by them.” “I will be torn in pieces first,” said the boy. He made the boy promise that he would never consent to be king while his elder

brothers were alive. Then giving them some jewels, the only riches, he said, he could bestow on them, he sent them away. Dr. Juxon, Bishop of London, was with him till late. When the Bishop had gone, he spent two hours more in meditation and prayers. The gentleman who was with him related that that though he himself could not sleep, the King slept quietly for four hours. About five in the morning—"two hours before dawn"—the King opened his curtain and called to him. "I will get up," he said, "for I have a great work to do this day"; and shortly after, "This is my second marriage day; I would be as trim to-day as may be, for before night I hope to be espoused to my Lord." He then chose the clothes that he would wear, taking care to have an extra shirt, for he said, "The season is so sharp as may probably make me quake. I would not have men think it fear; I fear not death. I bless God I am prepared."

After this he gave directions for certain books which he wished to be distributed, a Bible among them, with notes written by him in the margin, which he wished the Prince of Wales to have.

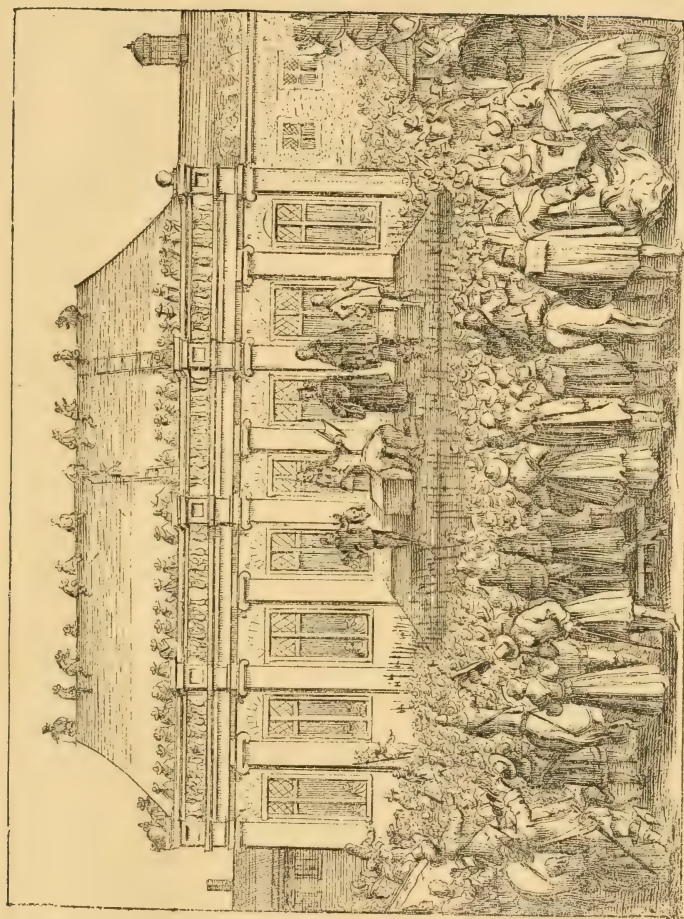
Bishop Juxon now came to read and pray with him. The Bishop read the 27th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, which contains the story of the Crucifixion of Our Lord. The King wanted to know whether

he had chosen it. "May it please your Majesty," he answered, "it is the proper Lesson for the day."

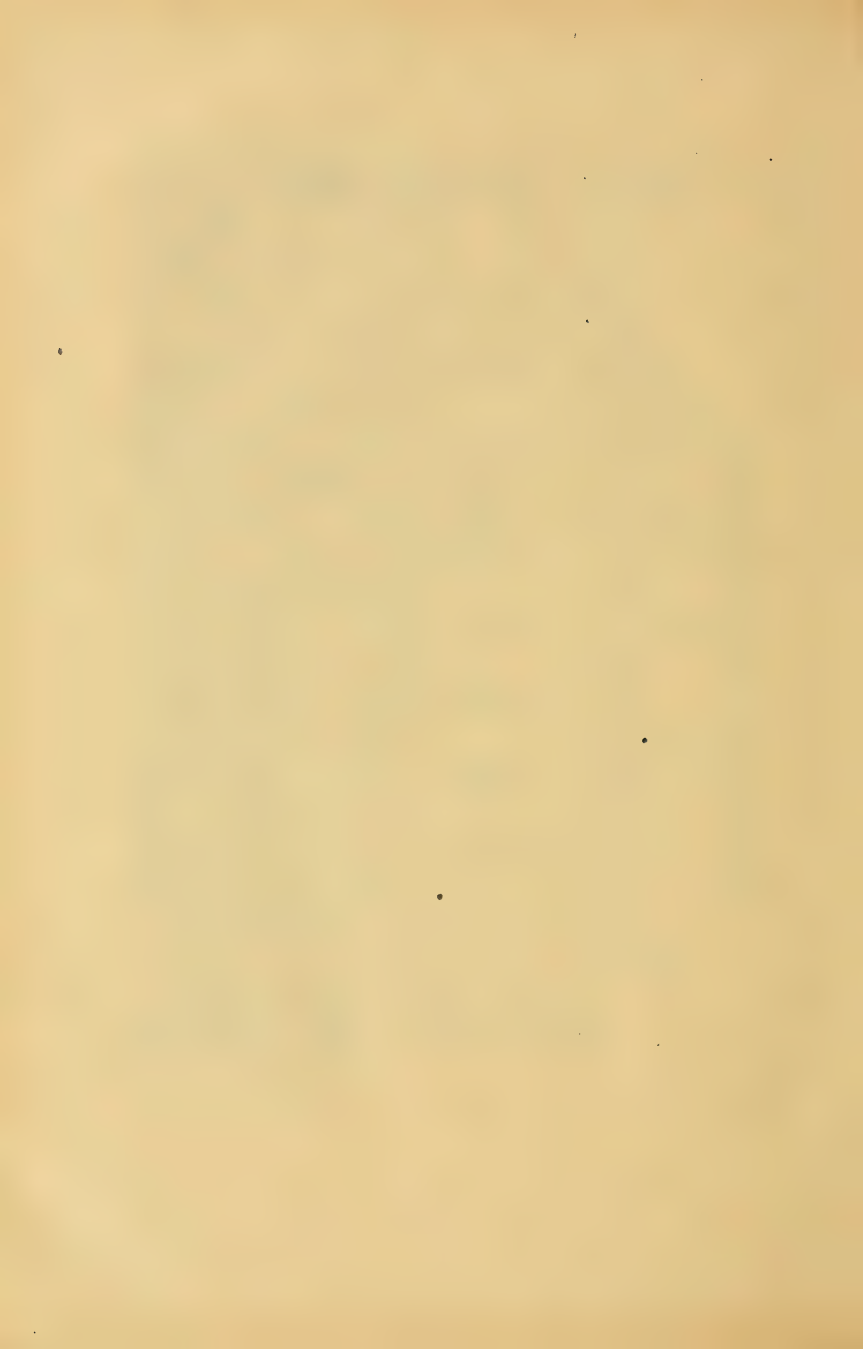
The officer who had been sent to fetch him to the place of execution now knocked at the door. "'Tis time," he said, "to go to Whitehall, where your Majesty may have some further time to rest." For a short time the King was left by himself; then, taking the Bishop by the hand, he said, "Let us go."

The way to Whitehall—it was at St. James's Palace that he had been since his coming to London—was lined on either side by soldiers. The drums were beaten without ceasing, so that it was scarcely possible to hear what was said.

The scaffold had been made outside one of the windows in Whitehall Palace, near the Banqueting Hall, looking westward on to what is now Parliament Street. The people were so far off that the King, perceiving that his voice could not reach them, said what he had to say to the gentlemen about him. He justified what he had done; at the same time he forgave his enemies. One of his gentlemen touched the edge of the axe. "Hurt not the axe," said the King, "that may hurt me." The Bishop then begged him to say something about religion. "I die a Christian," said the King, "according to the profession of



EXECUTION OF CHARLES I.



the Church of England, as I found it left by my father."

He begged the officer to take care that he was not put to pain, and twice warned the gentlemen near that they should not hurt the axe. To the executioner he said, "I shall say but short prayers, and then stretch forth my hands."

"There is but one stage more," said the Bishop. "This stage is turbulent and troublesome, but you may consider it will convey you a very great way—it will carry you from earth to heaven."

The King answered, "I go from a corruptible crown to one incorruptible, where no disturbance can be."

The scaffold was hung with black, and in the middle stood a block, with an axe leaning against it. Two men with masks on their faces stood by. The King put his hair into the cap which he had on his head, the Bishop and the executioner helping him. Then he knelt down and laid his head upon the block. The executioner severed it with one blow. The other masked man took it up, and cried in a loud voice, "This is the head of a traitor!" A great groan was the answer.

Whether the king deserved to die or not, it is certain that it was a great error to kill him, an error

which put back the cause of freedom in England by many years.

“ He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe’s edge did try ;

Nor called the gods with vulgar spite
To vindicate his helpless right,
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.”

BOOK III.

FROM THE LORD PROTECTOR TO QUEEN VICTORIA.

CHAPTER I.

THE LORD PROTECTOR.

WHEN the war between the King and the Parliament was brought to an end, there was no man whose name stood so high in the estimation of the nation as Oliver Cromwell. And, indeed, he had done more than any one else to win the victory for the Parliament. Again and again he and his Ironsides—for this was the name which men gave to the cavalry which he commanded—had turned the fortune of the day. He and they were terribly in earnest. "Our enemies," he had once said, "have the spirit of gentlemen; we must match it with the spirit of religion." The war finished, there was a great question as to what was to be done with the King, and Cromwell had much to do with deciding it. He strongly urged that Charles should be brought to trial, and, if found guilty, should be put to death. When this had been

done, men began to ask how the country was to be governed. For the time Parliament had the power, by Parliament being meant the House of Commons only, for the House of Lords had been abolished. But the army was not satisfied. It had won the victory, and it was not willing to be ruled by men who had done nothing, it was said, but talk. As it had been the Parliament against the King, so it was now, or would soon be, the army against the Parliament. We shall soon see how the struggle ended.

The first thing to be done was to make Ireland submit to the new order of things. Cromwell was appointed Lord Lieutenant and Commander-in-Chief, and took with him an army of 12,000 men. The war that followed was carried on with dreadful cruelty. Some years before the Irish had rebelled and massacred thousands of English settlers, men, women, and children. Cromwell and his army were determined to have vengeance for these things, and at the same time to make it impossible for the Irish to rebel again. At Drogheda, and again at Wexford, thousands of people, peaceable inhabitants as well as soldiers, were put to death. To this day the most hateful of all names to an Irishman is that of Cromwell.

He had not altogether finished the work of con-

quering Ireland, before he was called away to Scotland. The Scotch people had been displeased with the course of affairs, and had sent for the eldest son of Charles I., himself a Charles, who was then living in Holland. If he would consent to make certain promises, to follow the Presbyterian form of religion, and to govern by the advice of Parliament, they would make him king. Charles consented, though these conditions were not much to his mind, and crossed over from Holland to Scotland. Cromwell and his friends felt that this must not be allowed to go on. It was useless to have put an end to kings in England, if they were to be set up again in Scotland. Cromwell crossed the border, this time with sixteen thousand men. He threatened Edinburgh, but was compelled by the manœuvring of Leslie, the Scotch commander, to retire to Dunbar. There was some fighting before dawn on September 3 (1650). The English cavalry were driven back, and a regiment of infantry, which had advanced to support them, was broken. The time was come for Cromwell to act. An officer who was present with the English army writes: "The sun rising upon the sea, I heard Noll say, 'Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered.'" He gave the word to his own regiment of infantry to advance. They levelled their pikes and moved forward, the Scottish cavalry retreating before them. At that

moment the mist which covered the country lifted, and the Scots saw their cavalry falling back. A panic seized the whole army—they were raw soldiers, few of whom had ever seen a battle—the men threw down their arms and fled. Three thousand were killed, ten thousand taken, with all the baggage and artillery.



A GUNNER, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

But another battle had to be fought. Charles, who had been crowned king on January 1, 1651, resolved to make his way into England, and try his fortune there, hoping that a number of Royalists would join him. About twelve thousand Scottish soldiers went with him, and he reached Worcester without much difficulty. But his hopes of getting

support from his English friends were sadly disappointed. Not more than three or four thousand men joined his army. His force, all told, was little more than half that of the enemy. The Scots fought bravely in the battle that followed, and Charles himself showed no little skill as a general. But Cromwell, with his army of veterans, both better disciplined and superior in numbers, could not be resisted. The Royalists were utterly defeated, with the loss of three thousand killed, and twice as many taken prisoners. How Charles himself escaped I shall tell in my next chapter. The battle of Worcester was fought exactly one year after the battle of Dunbar.

The man who had conquered Ireland and Scotland, and had destroyed the last hopes of the Royalists in England, was, of course, more powerful than ever. It was not long before the Parliament found that he was their master. Sir Henry Vane had introduced a bill which Cromwell disliked. On April 20, 1653, he went down to the House of Commons, followed by a company of musketeers. He listened to the debate. When it seemed to be coming to an end, he whispered to Thomas Harrison, an old comrade, who sat by him, "This is the time I must do it," and rose to address the House. He began by praising it for the good that it had done, but soon changed his tune.

The members had thought of their own interest only ; they had refused to do justice ; they had oppressed the people ; above all, they had neglected the army. The Speaker said that this was not the language that ought to be used to Parliament ; it was all the worse because it was spoken by that Parliament's own servant, who had been made what he was by their kindness. Cromwell put *on* his hat—he had taken it off to speak—and cried, “Sir, I will put an end to your prating.” A few minutes after, he stamped his foot on the floor, and called to the officer who commanded the musketeers, “Bring them in ; bring them in.” At once the door was opened, and Colonel Wolseley with some twenty soldiers entered. After reproaching various members with their misdeeds, Cromwell bade the soldiers clear the House. Harrison took the Speaker by the hand and led him down from the chair. Some of the members left the House of their own accord, others were forced to go. When the chamber was empty, Cromwell pointed to the mace lying on the table : “Take away this bauble,” he said to one of the soldiers. He was now practically the ruler of England.

But he was not to have his way without opposition. It was necessary to have a Parliament, and a Parliament, whatever pains he might take to have no members but of his own way of thinking, was sure

to set itself against him. An Assembly, known in history by the name of the Little Parliament, was called together. But it soon showed itself unwilling to submit, and Cromwell had to call in his musketeers again. On December 16, 1653, he had the title of Lord Protector bestowed upon him, practically by the army.

As time went on he became more and more arbitrary ; and, we cannot doubt, more and more unhappy. He knew that he held a place which the will of the English people had not given him. But it was a place that he would not, indeed could not resign ; to resign it, he was persuaded, would be to cause more evils than to keep it. "'Tis against the voice of the nation," said one of his friends to him. "There will be nine in ten against you." "But what," he answered, "if I put a sword in the tenth man's hand ? Will not that do the business ?"

I pass quickly over this time. Cromwell professed to despise the title of king. "The name," he said, "is but a feather in the hat." As for the crown, it was only "a shining bauble for crowds to gape at or kneel to." Yet it seems that he secretly desired it. But to take it would have offended friends whom he could not afford to lose, and in the end he declared that he could not accept the government with this title.

But he was again declared Lord Protector, and this

time with more state and ceremony than before. In December 1653 he had been dressed in a suit of dark velvet, with long military boots, and a gold band round his hat ; and the ceremony took place in the Court of Chancery. Now, Westminster Hall itself was used for the purpose. On June 26, 1657, a splendid chair of state was set at the upper end. Cromwell stood before it, while the Speaker of the House of Commons put a mantle of purple velvet, lined with crimson, about his shoulders, presented him with a belt, richly gilt and embossed, girded him with a sword, and put a sceptre of solid gold into his right hand.

The troubles and difficulties through which he had to pass at home did not prevent him from making England greatly respected abroad. It was no time of peace. At one time or another England was at war with Holland, with France, with Spain, with Portugal, and always, thanks to the energy of Cromwell, and the courage and skill of his admirals and generals, she held her own.

The most famous of his dealings with foreign Powers was his interference on behalf of the Vaudois, the Protestant inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont. The Duke of Savoy, who was the ruler of the country, had treated these poor people with much cruelty. Cromwell, of course, could not help them directly,

for they were far out of reach. But he refused to conclude a treaty that was being negotiated with the King of France, unless the latter should first compel the Duke of Savoy to treat his Protestant subjects with more justice; and this was actually done.

At home, things went on from bad to worse. The Lord Protector could not raise money without Parliaments, and the Parliaments that he summoned always turned against him. Then he was in constant fear of assassination. It is said that he wore armour under his clothes, and that he carried loaded pistols about with him. When he went out, a large escort of soldiers surrounded his carriage. It was never settled beforehand by what road he would travel, and he was careful not to return by the same way by which he had come.

And he suffered a great loss in his private life. The best loved of his children was his daughter Elizabeth, the wife of a Northamptonshire gentleman, named John Claypole. She died on August 6, 1658, having first, it is said, entreated her father to lay down the power of which he had unlawfully possessed himself. Cromwell felt her death profoundly, and survived her but a few weeks. Removed from Hampton Court, where he had been suffering from ague, to London, he became rapidly worse. For some days

before his death he was barely conscious, but it is said that when asked directly whether he did not wish that his son Richard should be his successor, he answered "yes." He died on September 3, his lucky day, that on which he had won the battles of Dunbar and Worcester. A few days before all England had been shaken by such a storm of wind as had never been within the memory of the oldest inhabitants.

CHAPTER II.

THE ROYAL OAK.

THE young King Charles escaped from Worcester city by the north road just as Cromwell's soldiers were making their way into it on the other side. He would hardly have got away had not some brave followers made a desperate charge on the enemy, and so turned away their attention.

By the advice of the Earl of Derby, another fugitive from the battle,¹ Charles resolved to seek refuge at

¹ Lord Derby was afterwards taken and executed. He had submitted to the Parliament, and was therefore declared to be guilty of treason.

Boscobel, a house in Shropshire, belonging to a loyal lady, Mrs. Cotton by name. Riding all night he arrived at dawn at another of Mrs. Cotton's houses, called Whiteladies. His companions were Gifford, a cavalier, and Yates, a labouring man who acted as guide. At Whiteladies Charles put on the disguise



A CAVALRY ENCOUNTER.

which it was settled he should wear. He was to pass as a woodman. His clothes were shabby and coarse ; he carried a bill-hook in his hand : his hair was cropped close to his head, and the skin of his face and hands dyed brown. A little party of Royalists had gathered at Whiteladies ; they took leave of the king,

H H

as soon as he had completed his disguise, and rode away in another direction, Charles, with his guide Yates, going on to Boscobel. He had not been gone more than an hour when some troopers belonging to the enemy's army arrived, and after searching the house in vain, started in pursuit of the fugitives.

Yates had married a woman of the name of Penderell, and it was her brothers who now took charge of the King. The Penderells were natives of Tong, a village not far from Shifnal in Shropshire. There were six brothers, three of whom had fought for the King. One of these three was killed; the other two, John and George by name, were employed as woodmen at Boscobel. A fourth, William, was in charge of the house; a fifth, Humphrey, worked at the mill in the parish; the sixth, Richard, farmed a few fields. They were Roman Catholics, and had helped more than once to save priests of that faith when in danger of being arrested. It was not thought prudent that Charles should go to the house; Richard Penderell, accordingly, took him into the thickest part of the wood, and made him lie down on a blanket under one of the trees. Here Yates's wife brought him some food. The sight of the woman startled him. "Good woman," he said, "will you be faithful to a distressed cavalier?" She declared that she would sooner die than betray him. His next visitor

was the mother of the Penderells. The old woman kissed his hand, and falling on her knees thanked God that He had chosen her sons to deliver their King from his enemies.

It had been at first arranged that Charles should make his way to London. A large city, where many are coming and going every day, and where few know anything about their neighbours, is always an excellent place in which to hide. But now another plan was proposed. Charles was to seek shelter among his friends in Wales, make his way to the coast, and so escape to France. He and Yates left Boscobel Wood at nine in the evening, and reached the house of a friend named Wolf, at Madeley, at midnight. Madeley is not far from the Severn; they hoped to cross that river, and then make the best of their way into Wales. Wolf was afraid to take them into his house, where he had no safe hiding-place; there were two companies of militia in the village; to get across the Severn was impossible, for all the fords and bridges were guarded. Nothing was left but to return to Boscobel. It was still thought dangerous to enter the house, and the next day was spent by Charles and Colonel Careless, a cavalier whom he found at Boscobel, among the branches of the famous oak. The tree had been lopped a few years before, and had thrown out a very thick foliage. Charles and his companion saw

soldiers pass near it more than once in the day. Meanwhile, William Penderell and his wife Joan, while seeming to be at work—he a woodman, she busy in gathering sticks—kept watch. At night the fugitives came down from the tree and took shelter in the house. There was a secret chamber in it, and Charles thought that he should be as safe there as anywhere. His next move was to Moseley in Warwickshire (not far from Birmingham). It was a journey of more than twenty miles, and Charles, who was tired out with all that he had gone through during the last few days, was provided by Humphrey Penderell, the miller, with a horse. The five brothers and Yates accompanied the King, two walking before, two behind, and one on either side. Charles complained that the horse moved very heavily. “Sire,” replied Humphrey, “you do not recollect that he carries the weight of three kingdoms on his back.”

At Moseley a new plan was devised. A certain Miss Lane, daughter of Colonel Lane, of Bartley, near Walsall, had obtained a pass permitting her to visit a relative near Bristol. Charles was to disguise himself as her servant. If he reached Bristol there would be a good chance of finding a ship to carry him to France. While he was at Moseley the search was very hot, and a very careful watch had to be kept. Whiteladies and Boscobel had been again searched,

and now a troop of horse arrived at Moseley, and arrested the King's host on the charge of having fought at Worcester. He was able, however, to prove by the testimony of his neighbours that he had never left Moseley, and was released. That night Charles rode to Bartley, where he was to take up his character as servant. His dress up to this time had been a leathern doublet, with coat and breeches of coarse green cloth, so worn in places that it seemed to be white, stockings much darned at the knee and without feet, heavy shoes, and a grey steeple-crowned hat, without band or lining. He now put on a neat suit of grey, such as a groom might naturally wear. A three days' journey took the party to their destination, Abbotshill, a few miles west of Bristol. Here Charles was recognized by the butler. The man was loyal, however, and took the precaution of keeping out of the way two of his fellow-servants who were known to have republican principles. But no way of escape appeared, for no ship could be hired at Bristol, and another move was necessary.

The next plan was to go to Trent, near Sherborne, where a Royalist of the name of Windham resided. A forged letter was delivered to Miss Lane, calling her back to Bartley, where her father was said to be at the point of death. She hurriedly departed, and the King made his way to Trent. A ship was hired

at Lyme Regis to carry a nobleman and his servant to France—the nobleman was Lord Wilmot, while Charles was the servant. Charles, however, was to act the part of a young man eloping in a servant's disguise with a young lady, whose part was played by a Miss Juliana Coningsby. These two were to be received at an inn at Charmouth, a seaside village near Lyme. Again the scheme failed. The boat which was to fetch the passengers from Charmouth never appeared, the Lyme ship-master having repented of his agreement. Charles returned to Trent, and his friends tried to hire a ship at Southampton. This they succeeded in doing, but the vessel was seized to carry troops across to Jersey. A day or two afterwards the King had to leave Trent, where there were suspicions about his real character. His next refuge was in a house near Salisbury. Here he lay in hiding for five days. In the meanwhile a loyal gentleman, Colonel Gunter by name, succeeded in hiring a vessel from a loyal trader at New Shoreham. Charles made his way with all speed to Brighton, where he sat down to supper with Colonel Gunter, the trader, whose name was Mansel, and the captain of the vessel, whose name was Tattershall. The captain was observed to watch the King very closely during the meal. When it was over, he took the trader aside, and complained that he had been deceived. The stranger

in grey was the King. "I knew him," he said, "when he commanded the fleet three years ago." The master of the house also was aware of the quality of his guest. As Charles stood with one hand resting on the back of the chair, the innkeeper kissed the hand, saying—"Doubtless if I live I shall be a lord, and my wife a lady!"

At four o'clock in the morning the next day, the party went down to the shore. Here Tattershall fell on his knees before the King, and vowed that whatever might happen, he would land him safely on the coast of France. They embarked. When the ship had weighed anchor, her head was put for Deal, to which place she was bound. A little scene had been arranged between Charles and the master. The King addressed the crew, saying that he and his friend Wilmot were merchants in distress, and flying from their creditors; would they join him in persuading the master to alter his course and land them on the coast of France? He would give them twenty shillings for their trouble. The men did as they were asked, and Tattershall, after making some objections, took the helm, and steered for the French coast. At day-break they came in sight of land, the shore being Fécamp, which was two miles distant. The tide was low, and not being able to make the harbour, they cast anchor. But a suspicious sail hove in sight. The master

believed that it was a privateer from Ostend. This was not the case—it was really a French hoy—but it seemed safe to land the fugitives at once. The boat was lowered, and Charles and Lord Wilmot were rowed to shore. He had been traversing long distances for a long time,—not less than three hundred and fifty miles in forty-four days¹—he had been in the power of poor men, to whom the offered reward of a thousand pounds would have been wealth beyond all their hopes ; he had been recognized by several people who had spared no pains to help him, but no one seems even to have thought of betraying him. I shall have to tell a very similar story, hereafter, of another Prince of the same royal house.

¹ From Sept. 3 to Oct. 14.

CHAPTER III.

SOLDIER AND SAILOR.

EVERY one would be very much astonished now-a-days if a man who had never been even a midshipman, perhaps had never been to sea, were appointed to the command of a fleet. Yet this was what was done when in 1649 Robert Blake was appointed, together with two other officers in the army, to command the fleet, and yet no one was surprised. Blake had showed himself an excellent soldier,¹ and that was thought a good reason for supposing that he would make an excellent sailor.

His first service was to blockade Prince Rupert in Kinsale Harbour. War had ceased everywhere in Great Britain and Ireland, but the Prince was still carrying it on by sea, somewhat in the fashion of a pirate. Reduced to extremities by the blockade, he had no choice but to attempt an escape. He took the

¹ His chief service had been surprising the town of Taunton, and holding it against the attack of Lord Goring till he was relieved.

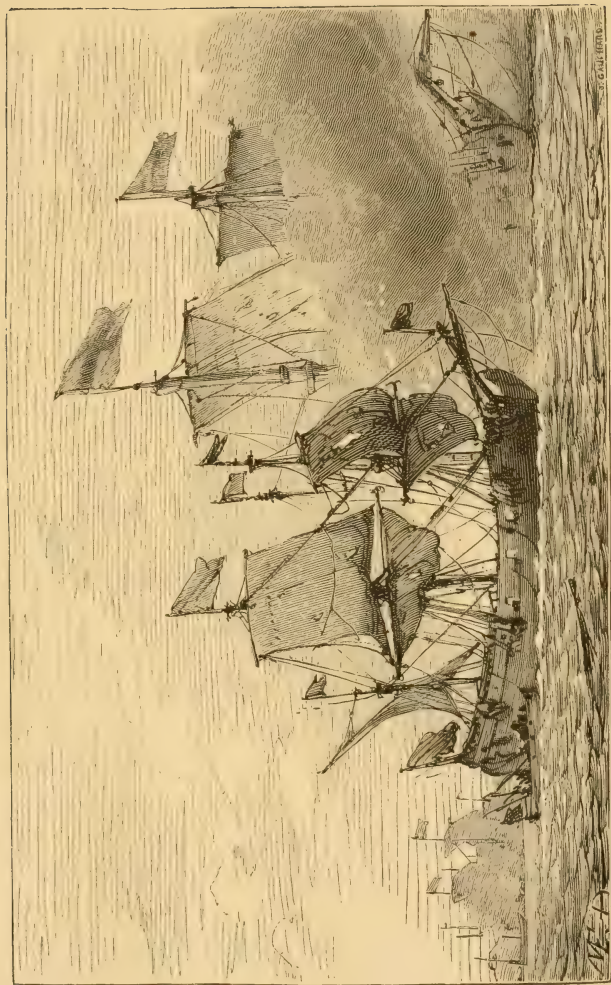
opportunity of a strong gale of wind, and succeeded in breaking out, but with the loss of three ships. He sailed to Lisbon, and made his way up the river Tagus, where he was under the protection of the King of Portugal. Blake followed him, but was fired on from the castle which commanded the river when he attempted to come to close quarters. The King of Portugal sent him a present of fresh provisions, with a polite message, but begged him not to come higher up the river, unless he should be compelled to do so by bad weather. Before long Blake was, or pretended that he was, so compelled, and came; but he anchored his ships a good way from Prince Rupert's, and, for the time, contented himself with sending to the King a statement of reasons why Prince Rupert was not worthy of protection. The King still refused to give him permission to attack, and Blake began to seize Portuguese ships, both coming from Brazil—for that country then belonged to Portugal—and going thither. In September he took seven outward-bound ships, and in October sunk or took eleven out of a home-bound fleet of twenty-three, with a cargo of 10,000 chests of sugar. Prince Rupert now contrived to get out of the Tagus, and made his way to Cartagena. Blake followed him thither, and asked the governor of the city for leave to attack. The governor referred the matter to Madrid, but while he

was waiting for an answer, the Prince escaped again, and got into Malaga. Here Blake entered the harbour without asking leave, and destroyed the whole squadron excepting two, with which the Prince escaped to the West Indies. English traders had nothing more to fear from him.

But a more formidable enemy was at hand. England and Holland were the chief trading nations of the world, and there was, of course, much jealousy and many quarrels between them. It is not easy to say which was in the right. Even when the two fleets fought, as they did before war had been regularly declared, we do not know which was to blame. The Dutch Admiral, Van Tromp by name, was told by the Dutch Council to refuse to allow his ships to be searched—the English had lately claimed the right to do this—and to salute or not, as he thought best.¹ Van Tromp came over to the Downs (a place in which ships lie at anchor between Dover and Deal), with forty men-of-war. Blake, who had fifteen only, but these of a larger size, came up from the westward to meet him, and fired a gun, thus demanding a salute. Van Tromp replied with a broadside. A regular

¹ The English claimed that in the Channel, as being their own sea, their men-of-war should be saluted by strangers. (To dip the flag was to salute.) Sometimes it was argued by the Dutch that they had been accustomed to salute the *King's* flag, and that the Commonwealth had no right to the compliment.

battle began, and the English fleet was in danger of being surrounded, when another squadron, commanded by Bourne, came up. After four hours of fighting, the Dutch lost two ships. This happened on May 19. For some months afterwards there was much discussion between the two governments. But they could not agree upon terms, perhaps because, as has been said before, the Dutch would not give to the Parliament what they had been willing to give to the King. Some fighting took place, mostly to the advantage of the English. In August, Blake took a whole fleet of merchantmen and six of the men-of-war which were protecting them. On September 29 there was a battle in which the Dutch fleet would have been destroyed but for the darkness coming on. At this time Van Tromp was in disgrace, and De Ruyter was in command of the Dutch fleet. The result of all this was that the trade of Holland was almost entirely stopped. The Dutch, in their distress, repented of the injustice with which they had treated Van Tromp, who had not really been to blame, and restored him to his command, and made so great an effort, that he was able to put to sea with a fleet of eighty ships. Blake had only thirty-seven with which to meet him. Whether he did not know the real strength of the enemy, or felt himself bound to fight, whatever the odds, the English admiral



NAVAL ENGAGEMENT, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.



joined battle. He attacked De Ruyter, who was in command under Van Tromp, in his flag-ship the *Triumph*, and was backed up by some but not by all of his fleet, for some of the captains were not well disposed to the Government. In the end Blake had to retreat into the Thames. Three of his ships were taken and two blown up. Many of the others were greatly damaged, none worse than the *Triumph*. It was after this battle, which took place on November 29, that Van Tromp sailed down the Channel with a broom at his main-top mast, to signify that he had swept the sea of his enemies.¹ This was, of course, a great blow to Blake, but it did not break his spirit. The Government at home, knowing when it had got a good man, did not think of taking away his command, but appointed the best officer they could find to help him, while they exerted themselves to the utmost to equip a new and stronger fleet. Very early in the year (1652) Blake sailed out of the Thames with seventy ships, and took up a position near the Isle of Portland. On February 18 Van Tromp came up from the westward with about as many ships of war, and a convoy of three hundred merchantmen. The English fleet was divided into three squadrons, which

¹ I give the story, but the latest authority (Professor Laughton, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) throws some doubt upon it.

were not near enough to help each other. Van Tromp attacked Blake's flag-ship, which was still the *Triumph*, and for a time had the best of the fight. Blake was severely wounded and his captain killed. But the other squadrons came up and the two fleets were now on equal terms. So they remained till nightfall. The next day Van Tromp made sail eastward, with his convoy in front, and his war-ships behind. Blake and his colleagues followed close behind. A running fight went on for two days, until the Dutch reached the shallower water further east. The English had decidedly the better of the fighting. Four Dutch ships were taken and five sunk, and between twenty and thirty merchantmen were captured. Blake was so disabled by his wound and by sickness, that he had to be put on shore. Both sides were busy in getting together and equipping all the ships they could. The Dutch had one hundred and twenty ships, with Van Tromp still commanding, the English nearly as many. The two fleets met on June 3 off the North Foreland. The first day neither obtained much advantage; on the second Blake came up with a squadron of seventeen fresh ships to the help of his colleagues. In the end Van Tromp lost one-and-twenty ships, 1300 prisoners, and a large number of killed and wounded.

This was the last time that Blake was to meet his old enemies. He had to be put on shore again, and

before he was fit for service, his colleague Monk, of whom we shall hear again, had defeated the Dutch in a great action off the mouth of the Texel. In this action Van Tromp was killed.

Blake was not a man who would let politics interfere with the business of fighting. It was reported that when he heard of Cromwell having turned out the Parliament, and made himself Chief of the State, he said to his officers—"It is not for us to mind state affairs, but to keep foreigners from fooling us." Still, we can easily believe that he was not altogether pleased with having to fight the Dutch, who had once been the allies of England, and who might well be so again. Anyhow, he had next to do with very different enemies. The towns of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, on the northern coast of Africa, were the habitation of pirates who were the terror of all the nations of Europe. Blake sailed to Algiers, and demanded that the Dey—this was the title of the governor, who was nominally subject to the Sultan of Turkey—that he should set free all Christian captives, and promise not to interfere with any English ships in the future. The Dey gave a civil answer. He would give up all the captives that were in his hands for a certain price apiece, and would promise to keep the peace. The Bey of Tunis, which Blake visited next, was insolent. "Look at my castles," he said. "Do you think I am afraid of

your fleet ?” Blake sailed into the Bay of Porto Ferino, bombarded the castle till it was in ruins, silenced all the enemy’s guns, and then sent the long-boats of his ships into the harbour with orders to set fire to the fleet in it. All the Bey’s ships, nine in number, were destroyed. This was done with the very small loss of twenty-five killed and forty-nine wounded. Tunis, after this, was glad to make peace, and Tripoli followed its example.

His last exploit was against Spain. News was brought to him that a fleet laden with silver was in the harbour of Santa Cruz, in the island of Teneriffe. It was protected by sixteen men-of-war ; the forts of the harbour were fully armed ; in fact, every preparation in the way of defence had been made. Yet Blake, though his force was but small, boldly attacked, and burnt, blew up, or sunk every Spanish ship, without losing one of his own. His strength was now rapidly failing ; he sailed home, but died on August 17, 1657, just as his fleet was entering Plymouth Harbour.

He was buried in Westminster Abbey, but all that he had done for England did not prevent the Royalists from taking his body out of its grave and hanging it on a gibbet.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GREAT PLAGUE.

NOTE.—I have taken (with some corrections) the contents of this chapter from Daniel Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*. Defoe did not write from his own recollections, for he was but four years old at the time, but it is commonly allowed that an eye-witness could not have described this terrible calamity more accurately.

IT was in the month of November, in the year 1665, that there first began to be spread abroad a report that the Plague had come again¹ to London. But, for the most part, men took little heed of it, for such things are often said without cause. Nor, indeed, did we know the whole truth, because, as long as it was possible, the matter was kept secret. But when the weather set in hot, things became so bad, one hundred and twenty dying in the parish of St. Giles' only, that there was no more concealing the trouble. And now began a great flight of people from the city into the country.

¹ The Plague had been many times in London before. In 1499, 30,000 died of it, and the same number in 1625.

In the Broad Street of Whitechapel, where I had my dwelling, being a saddler by trade, was nothing to be seen but wagons and carts, loaded with children and servants and goods, coaches also with those of the better sort, and horsemen. And it could plainly be seen that all were equipped for travelling. This being so, I doubted what I should myself do. To leave my trade was to hazard the loss of all that I had in the world. To stay, on the other hand, was to put my life in peril. I changed my opinion more than once. But when I resolved to go, I was put off more than once by some accident. First, the servant whom I purposed to take with me, deceived me, for being frightened at the increase of the distemper, and not knowing when I should go, he left me. Secondly, the woman whom I should have put in charge of my house and goods fell sick. But what chiefly determined me was this, that taking up the Bible, if haply I might find guidance therein, I lighted upon the 91st Psalm, wherein is written : *I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortress, my God ; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence. . . . Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation. Thus shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.*

At the first the distemper was chiefly in the out-parishes, because they were very populous and fuller also of poor, but afterwards the city itself, that is to say, within the walls, was sorely visited. Only it



AN OLD LONDON STREET.

must be remembered that many of the inhabitants, being rich men, had the means of going away, whereas the poor were constrained to stay. Verily I might have thought, when I walked abroad, that all

the inhabitants of London had gone out of it, the streets which were commonly thronged being now grown desolate. Yet a man could not fail to learn that there were some yet left behind. The voice of mourning was heard in the streets, and the shrieks of women and children at the doors and windows of their houses, where their dearest relations were perhaps dying or just dead, were frequent to be heard. But this was rather in the first part of the visitation. Towards the latter end, men's hearts were hardened. They did not concern themselves for the loss of friends, expecting that they should themselves be summoned the next hour.

Then also there were other things that increased the general fear. A blazing star or comet appeared for several months before the beginning of the Plague. Some would have it that it was of a faint, dull, and languid colour, but this they said, I notice, not so much at the time as afterwards. Books also, pretending to be religious, were published at this time, and frightened the people, or at the least some of them, sorely. One of these was entitled "Come out of her, my People, lest you be partaker of her Plague." Another was called "Fair Warning." These did, either openly or secretly, foretell the ruin of the city. Then there was a preacher who cried continually in the streets—"Yet forty days, and LONDON

shall be destroyed." He said no more, but repeated these words continually, with a voice and countenance full of horror. He would not stay to speak to any one or even to take food, but cried continually these words. Then some pretended, or, it maybe, believed, that they saw wondrous sights, as an angel with a sword, or the spirit of some dead man, pointing to a tombstone as the place to which many would soon come.

Of quacks and mountebanks that professed to have remedies against this disorder there was, as may be supposed, no lack. The door-posts of the houses and the corners of the streets were plastered over with their papers. Here one might see such flourishes as these: "INFALLIBLE Preventive Pills against the Plague," "NEVER-FAILING Preservatives against the Infection," "The ONLY TRUE Plague-Water," and the like. I could, if I would, fill a book with them. Others set up bills to summon people to their lodgings for direction and advice. Here you may read one of them:

"An Italian Gentlewoman just arrived from Naples, having a choice secret to prevent infection, which she found out by great experience, and did wonderful cures with it in the late Plague there, wherein there died 20,000 in one day."

One of these added to his bills, which he gave about

the streets, these words, "He gives advice to the poor for nothing." Abundance of poor people came to him accordingly, to whom he said much, telling them many good things for them to do. But the conclusion of all was that he had a preparation, which if they took such a quantity of, every morning, he would pawn his life they would never have the Plague. And the price of this was half-a-crown. One of them that came says to him: "Sir, I am a poor alms-woman, and am kept by the parish, and you say that you give your help to the poor for nothing." "Ay, good woman," says he, "I give my advice for nothing, but not my physic." "Alas, sir," answers the woman, "you have laid a snare for the poor," and gave him many ill words, and stood at his door all that day telling her tale to all the people that came, till the doctor, finding she turned away his customers, was obliged to call her up-stairs again and give her his box of physic for nothing, which, perhaps, too was good for nothing when she had it.

Others dealt in charms and amulets, as if the Plague was a thing to be kept off with signs of the Zodiac; papers tied up in knots, with words or figures written upon them, as particularly, the word Abracadabra, formed in triangle or pyramid thus—

A B R A C A D A B R A
 A B R A C A D A B R
 A B R A C A D A B
 A B R A C A D A
 A B R A C A D
 A B R A C A
 A B R A C
 A B R A
 A B R
 A B
 A

But the true physicians themselves, when the disorder was at its worst, could do nothing. It defied all medicine ; the very physicians were seized with it, with their preservatives in their mouths, and some of them the most skilful of their profession. Of the means that were employed by persons in authority, as the Lord Mayor and aldermen within the City and the Justices of the Peace without it, the chief was the shutting up of houses that were infected. A watchman was set there night and day, to prevent the inhabitants stirring out, or any coming to them. This looked hard and cruel, and doubtless many perished that might have lived if they had been suffered to leave the infected houses without delay. But the public good justified the private mischief.

Yet many did escape out of these houses, as particularly, when the watchman was sent on some errand, for it was his business to go of any errand on which

the family sent him, as to buy food and physic, or to fetch physicians or nurses, or to order the dead-cart. It was not possible that one man could watch a house, it having, perhaps, more than one door. Doubtless, also, many were bribed to suffer the dwellers in the infected houses to escape from them. I can scarcely find it in my heart to blame such as gave the bribes or such as received them. I pitied much three watchmen that were publicly whipped through the streets for suffering people to go out from infected houses.

Who shall describe the terrible sights and sounds that were to be seen and heard in the streets? The most dreadful thing that I myself encountered was of my own seeking, for I must needs go and see the great pit that they had digged for them that died of the Plague in the churchyard of our parish of Aldgate. 'Twas about 40 foot in length, and about 16 foot broad, and about 9 foot deep when I saw it, but afterwards, it was said, they dug it in one part as far as 20 foot, till they could get no further for the water. Many cried out at the size of it, saying that the churchwardens had a mind to bury the whole parish in it. But the churchwardens knew better than did they who blamed them. For having begun to bury on the 6th of September, they had thrown into it 1114 bodies in the space of two weeks, and so, the bodies having thus come to lie within six foot of the surface

—and none were suffered to lie nearer—they were constrained to fill it up. Having seen it when it was newly digged, I saw it again on September 10th, when there was 400 buried, going in the night-time. This I did, though it was forbidden, having some acquaintance with the sexton. The good man would have dissuaded me. “’Tis our duty,” he said, “and we must do it at all hazards, but you that have no call there is nothing to justify.” But when I said that it might be an instructing sight and not without its uses, he answered—“Go in; depend upon it, ’twill be a sermon to you, and the best you ever heard in your life.”

When I heard this I wavered, but seeing two links¹ come over from the Minories, and hearing the bell-man, and the dead-cart afterwards appearing, I could no longer resist it, but went in. There was no one in the churchyard but the buriers and the man that had the cart. But when they came to the pit, I saw a man in a brown cloak, going to and fro, and making motions under his cloak as one in a great agony. The buriers gathered round him, supposing him to be one of the desperate natures that would throw themselves alive into the grave. But they found him to be no such, but one oppressed with a dreadful weight of grief, for in the cart were his wife

¹ Torches carried by men.

and several of his children. When he saw their bodies shot into the pit, for to lay them decently was not possible, he gave a great cry, and fell down in a swoon. This, I say, was the most dreadful sight I ever saw.

In this place I will relate in what manner I myself lived when the Plague was at its height, following herein the counsel of a physician who was very skilful in his art, and also my very good friend. He bade me lock up myself and my family in my home, and not suffer any one to go abroad. Nor was I to open any door or window except I first made a very strong smoke with rosin, or pitch, or brimstone, or gunpowder, in the room where the door or window was to be opened. Not having laid in any store of provisions, I could not keep within doors entirely. Nevertheless, though it was very late, I attempted something towards it. I went and bought two sacks of meal, and having an oven for several weeks we baked all our own bread. Also, I bought malt, and brewed as much beer as would fill all the casks that I had in my house. Also I laid in a quantity of salt butter and Cheshire cheese. As for flesh meat, the Plague raged so violently among the butchers that I judged it not advisable to go among them; so we were constrained to make shift without it.

But though I kept my family, to wit, an old

woman that managed the house, a maid-servant, and two apprentices, within doors, I could not prevail upon myself, so curious was I, to stay entirely within. Yet I seldom went abroad but that I came home greatly terrified with what I had seen, to wit, persons falling dead in the streets, for some were taken with the disease and did not know it, till it had consumed all their strength, and sick people heaving open their chamber windows, and crying out in a most dismal, surprising manner, and such-like things.

Once, walking in Well Alley, I heard a great screaming in a house, and a noise of women and children running to and fro. Then I saw a garret window on the other side of the Alley thrown open, from which one called and asked, "What is the matter?" Upon which from the other house it was answered, "O Lord! my old master has hanged himself!" The other asked, "Is he quite dead?" and the first answered, "Ay, ay, quite dead; quite dead and cold!" This person was a merchant and a deputy-alderman, and very rich.

Another day I walked out into the fields towards Bow, for I had a great mind to see how things were managed on the river and among the ships. I had even a thought, having some concern in shipping, that the best way to avoid infection would be to retire into a ship. Musing on this I turned from Bow to

Bromley, and so to Blackwall. Here I saw a poor man walking by himself on the sea-wall. I fell into some talk with him, and asked him, how people did thereabouts? "Alas, sir," said he, "almost all desolate; all dead or sick." Then, pointing to one house, "There they are all dead," said he, "and the house stands open; nobody dare go into it." Then I asked him what he did there alone. Thereupon he pointed to a very little low boarded house, and said: "That's my house; and there are my poor wife and children. She is visited with the Plague, and so is one of the children. She, I hope, will recover; but I fear the child will die. I work for them as much as I am able." "How is that?" said I. "Why, sir," says he, "I am a waterman, and there's my boat, and the boat serves me for a house. I work in it by day, and sleep in it by night. What I get I lay down upon that stone," showing me a broad stone on the other side of the street, "and halloo and call to them till I make them hear, and they come and fetch it."

"Well, friend," says I, "but how can you get any money as a waterman? Does anybody go by water in these times?" Then he told me how he fetched provisions for ships that lay in the river, buying them from places not infected, as from Woolwich, and from single farm-houses on the Kentish side, places where he was known.

After some further talk, the poor woman opened the door, and called, "Robert, Robert!" He answered, and bade her stay a few moments, and he would come. So he ran down the stairs to his boat, and fetched up a sack in which were certain provisions that had been given him. These he took to the stone, and laid them out on it, and also the money that he had earned in the week, four shillings and a groat. His wife came and fetched them away, but was so weak that she could not carry all at once, though the weight was not much. So she left her little boy by it till she could come again. Then the man cried to her, "The Lord keep you all," and so he turned to go away.

There are many more things to be told about this terrible time, of how some stayed bravely at their posts, as clergymen and others, and others fled for their lives; how some were moved by the visitation to repentance, and others were made more desperate; but I have consumed enough of time and space, and so must make an end. I may say, by way of conclusion, that the sum of those who died this year by the Plague, in London, was counted at 68,596 persons, but I should reckon it to have been near upon 100,000.

NOTE.—The population of London at this time was not more than 600,000.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT FIRE.

WILL God never set an end to the troubles of this city? I had thought that in the year now past London had suffered its full measure of evil, yet now there has befallen it a yet worse thing. They that the Plague spared are now for the most part without a roof to cover them.

'Tis a week now since I came back from Henley-upon-Thames, where I had been passing a week with my uncle Richard. Being somewhat tired with my journey, I went to my chamber at nine o'clock. An hour or so after John Pearce, my fellow 'prentice, woke me saying that there was a great fire burning near to London Bridge. I donned my clothes with all haste, for I have always been ready to go any whither for the sight of a fire. God forgive me if I did it from want of heart! But this I can say of a certainty, that from this time forward such things will be no pleasure to me but a terror.

We found that there was a great conflagration,

scores of houses, as it seemed to me, burning together near to the end of London Bridge. One in the crowd told me that the fire began at the King's baker in Pudding Lane. By this time it had come to Fish Street, nor did there seem any likelihood of staying it, for, by some mischance, there was no water in the conduits of the New River. Had they been full, it would not, in my judgment, have availed much, for the heat was so fierce that none could approach the burning houses. The fire was all the worse because the wind blew so strongly. Nor must it be forgotten that everything was beyond usual ready to burn, the summer having been very hot and dry. While I watched, I saw a great flake of fire carried on to the roof of St. Magnus' Church, which, as you know, is hard by the Bridge. Certain sailors, at the instance of the parson, who was greatly concerned for his church, set a ladder against the parapet, and carried up buckets of water from the Thames. But it was of no more avail than if one poured a cup of water into the melting furnace at Hawkhurst.¹ Indeed one of the men barely escaped with his life, the ladder catching fire before he could come to the ground. For the most part there was no thought of staying the flames, which indeed was plainly impossible, but of saving

¹ In Kent, one of the places where the manufacture of iron was carried on at this time.

such goods and chattels as could be got out of the houses. Such as dwelt in the neighbourhood of the river fared best in this respect, for they put their possessions into barges and lighters. To the rest it often happened that they had to remove their property twice or thrice, the house to which it was first taken, though at first it had seemed safe, being soon in manifest danger of the flames. There were some who, having changed their refuge, so to speak, twice or thrice or even more often, yet lost in the end all that they possessed. Every place was crowded with people lamenting, and there were pitiable sights without end to be seen. Yet I know not whether anything more moved my heart than to see the pigeons which dwell in great numbers by the riverside, especially at the wharves where they store corn, flying about their cotes, as if being loth to leave them. The poor birds would tarry even till their wings were burned, and they dropped down into the fire. 'Tis strange that in the midst of such unhappiness of men and women I should think of brute creatures, yet so it was.

About eight o'clock John Pearce and I went home—my master's house, you should know, is on the south side of the river, and so was out of danger. After breakfast, being quite spent, we slept awhile, but waking about noon, went forth again. A water-

man of our acquaintance took us in his boat, and we rowed to and fro till it was dark. All this time the fire grew fiercer and fiercer. Even on the river, we keeping as close as might be to the further shore, 'twas as much as we could do to endure the heat. Drops and flakes of fire also would be blown into our faces by the wind, so that we were glad to have the water so close at hand. At nightfall 'twas a most horrible sight we saw. The flame seemed not to be as of an ordinary fire, but more than commonly terrible, with a colour as of blood. And the compass of it was marvellously great. There was an arch of fire of more than a mile long. The noise too was most horrid, a continual roaring, and now and then a loud crash, when some great house or church fell in a ruin.

That night John Pearce and I slept but two or three hours, if that which was so troubled could be called sleep, and then out again. This time our friend the waterman took us to Westminster, where we landed and went on foot along the Thames. At Temple Bar we encountered a certain alderman with whom my master often does business. Master Statham, for that is his name, was very wroth with my Lord Mayor. "The man is no better than a child" quoth he. "I myself stood by when Mr. Pepys, who is clerk to the Navy Board, came with a message from the King that he should spare no houses, but pull

them down on every side, so that the fire, having nothing that it could devour, might die out. And what did he answer. ‘Lord! what can I do? I am spent; people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses; but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it.’ And so all that he did was to go home



THE GREAT FIRE.

and refresh himself.” I could not wonder at the Alderman’s anger, for he had himself lost a fine house and a great store of goods, but it needed a man of no common parts, a Julius Cæsar, or if I may name him, an Oliver Cromwell, to order things rightly, at such a time.

Going eastwards, after we had parted from the

Alderman, we saw what seemed more terrible than anything that we had before beheld, the great church of St. Paul's in flames. The church is, or rather was—alas that I should write the word !—near upon six hundred feet in length,¹ and more than one hundred feet in breadth, and the spire near upon five hundred feet high.² The flames had not yet so mastered it but that one could see the whole form of the building, but they were breaking out of the windows and climbing, as it seemed to us, up the tower.

I saw the Duke of York riding with his guards after him. They are much needed for the keeping of order. Evil-minded men took occasion of this trouble, as is always their custom, to make profit by robbery and the like. I hear that the King also has greatly bestirred himself to help at this time, but I have not chanced to see him.

On the third day, that is Tuesday, I took boat again and went down the river as far as the Tower. It was indeed scarcely possible to make one's way by land, so great was the throng, for the country folk have crowded into the city, eager to see what may be seen, and some of them, I fear, hoping to lay hands upon

¹ The exact number was 596.

² The tower was 285, and the spire that rose from it 208 more, this was measured from the floor. The cross of new St. Paul's is 425 feet *above the sea* ; its actual height about 50 feet less.

goods left without watch. Being by the Tower stairs I saw a great company of workmen that had come from Deptford and Woolwich. Mr. Pepys, who is a notably clever man, had sent for them. It was his purpose to blow up houses with gunpowder, for 'tis too slow a business to pull them down, and these men are used to deal with such work. This I heard from the captain of the barge in which they came. And, sure enough, about the space of two hours after, we heard a great and terrifying noise, and saw a great cloud of dust, as it seemed, rise into the air. Those that were there judged it to be near to Seething Lane, wherein is Mr. Pepys' office, which, because there are many papers and the like of great value, they are most desirous to save. But doubtless the same will be done in other parts. But 'tis strange to see how little men think of the public good, and how much of their own.

Going the next day to the same spot, I found that the fire had been indeed stayed from spreading eastward. Barking Church stands mostly unhurt, but the flames came so near that they scorched the dial and consumed part of the porch. Climbing to the top of the steeple I saw the saddest sight of desolation that ever I beheld; everywhere great fires, all the more violent because there were many stores of brimstone, cellars of oil, and the like in those parts.

Clothworkers' Hall, where there was a great store of oil, burnt, as I heard afterwards, for three whole days.

It is too early as yet, for I am writing this on the eighth day after the beginning of the fire, to reckon up the total damage. So much, however, is known, that the whole city between the Tower and the Temple has been consumed, and in this portion eighty-six churches, not reckoning St. Paul's.

There is much talk about the cause of this great calamity. Some will have it that the Dutch sent over men to kindle it ; others, and this is indeed the more common belief, protest that it has been the work of the Papists. For myself, I pretend neither to affirm nor to deny, except so far as to say that there is no need to look beyond the causes that we know.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DUTCH IN THE MEDWAY.

THE most dreadful plague and the worst fire that had ever been known in England were followed in the very next year (1667) by the greatest disgrace

that the country ever suffered. This disgrace was greatly due to the wickedness of the King, Charles II. He wasted on his own pleasures the money which should have been spent on the fleet.¹ You will remember how, in the time of the Protector, Blake had won victory after victory over the Dutch fleets. And even in the war which began in 1664 the English had held their own, winning a great battle off Lowestoft, on June 3, 1665 ; and though defeated off the North Foreland on June 1—4, 1666, being again victorious in a battle near the mouth of the Thames about two months later. In 1667 there were negotiations for peace. Everything was settled except the right to one of the Spice Islands which the Dutch were under promise to give back to England. The King took it for granted that this would be arranged, and ordered the fleet to be dismantled. The fewer ships he had to keep up, the more money he would have to spend on himself and on his favourites. But the matter of the island was not settled, and peace was not made. The Dutch saw their opportunity and did not fail to use it. De Ruyter, who was in chief command, ordered the

¹ Samuel Pepys, who was Secretary to the Navy at this time, writes in his Diary (Sept. 23, 1666) that it would be difficult to tell what had become of all the money that Parliament had voted for the war. This was about £4,000,000, whereas only £2,200,000 had been spent, and what should have remained was not to be found.

fleet, which consisted of seventy vessels, to meet him in separate squadrons at the buoy off the Nore. He intended to sail up the Thames and the Medway, and to destroy the docks in which many of the English ships were laid up.

The English Government knew what was intended, and did something to guard against it. Three



MEN OF WAR.

months before they had given orders to build a fort at Sheerness, to throw a boom across the Medway, to furnish the batteries with guns, and to get ready ten fire-ships. But to give orders for works without money to carry them out was useless. The Commissioners of the Navy were already nearly a million in debt, and money was more scarce than it had been for

a long time. This state of things had been brought about by the Plague and the Fire. Commonly when money was wanted in a hurry, the rich Companies and merchants in the City were able to lend it. But now they had nothing to spare. The Plague had stopped all trade for more than half-a-year, and when this was at an end the fire came and destroyed half of London. This had to be rebuilt. So the English Government would have found it hard to borrow, even if it had had good credit. Anyhow there was no money; the sailors refused to serve; the labourers would not work. So De Ruyter found no real resistance. He sent one squadron as far as Gravesend; the other was to go up the Medway and burn the shipping that was in that river. The fort at Sheerness, which is on the right bank of the river where it joins the sea, fired upon the Dutch fleet, but to little or no purpose. The boom, however, was of more use. It stood against the shock of the Dutch men-of-war, though they came against it with both wind and tide. But even here the Government had been badly served. There was another channel which had been left unguarded. The Dutch vessels made their way up this, and opened fire upon the forts. At the same time, first one heavy fire-ship was driven against the boom, and then another; the chain broke under the weight of the two; very soon the guard-ships which

had been moored behind it were on fire. The next disaster that happened was the taking of the hull of the *Royal Charles*, a man-of-war of the largest size. It had been left too far down the river. Samuel Pepys writes in his Diary (June 13)—“No sooner up but hear the sad news confirmed of the *Royal Charles* being taken by them, and now in fitting by them (which Pett should have carried up higher by our several orders, and deserves, therefore, to be hanged for not doing it).” The next day, in spite of all the English were able to do in the night by way of mounting guns on the batteries, and collecting men to work them, there were fresh losses. The Dutch again came up the river. The men-of-war anchored in front of the batteries and engaged them. Meanwhile the fire-ships went on and burnt three more first-rates, the *Royal James*, *Oak*, and *London*. This done, the Dutch fleet went down the river again to the Nore.

De Ruyter now sailed along the south coast. There was no fleet to hinder him, but when he attempted to burn the ships at Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Torbay, he failed; nor did he again venture to sail up the Thames. But he had inflicted such a disgrace upon England as is scarcely to be equalled in all her history.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SEVEN BISHOPS.

CHARLES II., who had certainly during his life showed himself as careless of religion as a man could be, declared himself on his death-bed to be a Roman Catholic. His brother, James, Duke of York, who succeeded him, had for many years belonged to the Roman Church. There had, indeed, been an attempt to prevent him from becoming king on this account, but it had failed. Now, those who professed the Roman Catholic faith had much to put up with. They could not hold offices under Government, nor sit in Parliament, nor were they allowed to have public service in their churches or chapels. King James was determined to release them from their "disabilities," as they were called. In 1687 he published a Declaration, in which he said that though he would gladly see all his people of the same faith as himself, he would not use any force to bring this about. He wished his subjects, whatever their belief, to have liberty to practise it openly. The Established

Church should still have her legal rights, but those who differed from her were not to suffer for it. No one, in particular, was to be kept out of any office because he did not belong to the Established Church.

Now all this may have been right, but the King had no power to do it. He was really trying to repeal, by his own simple word, a number of Acts of Parliament. The Declaration was issued a second time on April 27, 1688. A week afterwards the King made an Order in Council that it was to be read on two Sundays—May 20th and 27th—in every church and chapel in London, and on two other Sundays—June 3rd and 10th—in all the other churches of England and Wales.

The clergy of London held a meeting to decide whether the Order was to be obeyed. At first the majority were disposed to obey. But one of their number declared that, whatever others might do, he would not read it. Some of the most eminent of the others agreed with him. In the end it was generally determined that the Declaration should not be read. The Bishops also held a meeting, and came to the same conclusion. They consulted with some of the other clergy, and drew up a petition to the King. They should be ready, they said, to do all they could to relieve in the proper way the consciences of those who differed from them, but they had been

advised that the King had no power to issue the Declaration, and that therefore they could not send it out for the clergy to read. This paper was signed by the Archbishop and six Bishops. The six went to the King to put it before him. No time was to be lost, for it was Friday, and the next Sunday was the day appointed for its first reading. Bishop Lloyd, of St. Asaph, presented it to the King. James, who had not expected them to resist, was very angry. "I did not expect this from you. This is a standard of rebellion." The Bishops were greatly troubled by the word. Trelawney, Bishop of Bristol, fell on his knees and said, "For God's sake, sir, do not say so hard a thing of us. No Trelawney can be a rebel. Remember how my family has fought for the Crown." "We are ready," said another, "to die at your feet." The King grew more and more angry. "I will be obeyed," he said; "go to your dioceses and see that I am obeyed. This paper I will keep. I will remember you that have signed it."

On the Sunday the Declaration was read in four only out of the hundred churches in London. Even in these the congregation left the place before the reading was finished. Much the same happened in the country. Not one clergyman in fifty obeyed the order.

A few days afterwards the Seven were called before

the Council. The King could do nothing to make them change their minds, and that evening they were sent to the Tower. As they were taken down the Thames from Whitehall, they were greeted by thousands of people with loud cheers; many even rushed into the water to ask for their blessing. The very sentinels of the Tower did the same, and the garrison would drink no other health. Many people



WESTMINSTER HALL.

of the highest rank came next day to pay them their respects. Among their visitors were ten Nonconformist ministers. The Protestant Dissenters would not consent to be helped by the King, if this was to be done against law. The Bishops remained in prison for a week only; on June 29 they were brought to trial.

Meanwhile the whole country was greatly moved by what had happened. In Cornwall, the native

county of Bishop Trelawney, the miners sang a ballad of which the chorus was—

“And shall Trelawney die, and shall Trelawney die?

Then twenty thousand Cornish boys will know the reason why.”

When the 29th came, the lawyers of the Crown did their best to “pack” the jury, *i. e.* to let no one be a member of it who would not be likely to find a verdict of guilty. But they could not hinder the prisoners’ right to object to a certain number of jury-men. Some of the forty-eight summoned were Roman Catholics, some were in the King’s service. To these the Bishops’ lawyers objected. The Crown lawyers, on the other hand, objected to some whom they believed to be inclined to the cause of the Bishops. The Chief Justice and the three other Judges of the King’s Bench sat to try the case. The Bishops were accused of publishing a “libel,” *i. e.* something either false, or, if true, of such a kind as to do injury to some one.

The first thing was to prove that the petition presented to the King was written by the Bishops. The lawyers called witnesses to swear to the handwriting, but they could get nothing certain from them. Then they called a Clerk of the Council, who had been present when the Bishops had been brought before it. He swore that he had heard them own to

their signatures. Then it came out that they had done this at the King's command, and in the belief that their doing this would not be used against them. The King had, indeed, made no promise, but the Bishops had understood that they would be safe in doing what they did. This was the reason why the lawyers had tried to prove the writing in other ways. It was not to the credit of the King that he should have made the prisoners give evidence against themselves.

Then it became necessary to prove that the libel had been *published*. The Bishops had written and signed the paper, but was this the paper given to the King? Here also there was a difficulty, but at last this, too, was removed by the Earl of Sunderland, who was President of the Council.

Lastly came the great question which the jury had to decide. Was the petition really a libel, false or malicious? The lawyers on both sides argued this question, and the judges gave their opinions. The Chief Justice thought that it was false and malicious; so did another of the judges. The third, however, declared that it seemed to him nothing more than what a subject might lawfully present; and the fourth boldly affirmed that the Declaration of Indulgence was against law, and that therefore the Bishops were quite in the right.

The jury was locked up to consider their verdict, being carefully watched to see that no food or drink reached them. At first nine were for acquitting, and three for convicting. Then two of the three gave way. The only one that held out was Michael Arnold, the King's brewer. He had been very unwilling to serve. It was reported that he had said, "Whatever I do I am sure to be half-ruined. If I say *Not Guilty*, I shall brew no more for the King; if I say *Guilty*, I shall brew no more for any one else." One of the eleven wished to argue the question with him. Arnold sulkily refused. His conscience was not satisfied, and he would not acquit the Bishops. "If it comes to that," said the other, "look at me. I am the largest and strongest of the twelve; before I find such a petition as this a libel, here will I stay till I am no bigger than a tobacco pipe." It was six in the morning before Arnold yielded.

At ten o'clock the court met, and the foreman of the jury gave in the verdict of *Not Guilty*. It was met with a tremendous shout of applause. Everywhere the news was heard with delight. That day the King visited the camp at Hounslow. When the news was brought to him, he set out for London. As soon as his back was turned, the soldiers broke out into a cheer. He asked the reason. "Nothing, sire," was the answer. "They are only cheering because

the Bishops are acquitted." "Do you call that nothing?" he said; "so much the worse for them." Less than five months afterwards King James fled from England.

CHAPTER VIII.

LONDONDERRY.

THE cause of King James was lost for ever in England, but in Ireland it still prevailed. It was not that the Irish people had any particular liking for him. He was a foreigner, and they had always wished to be ruled by a prince of their own race. But then he was no longer King of England, and he was of their own way of thinking in religion. To have a Roman Catholic king, who would have no reason to prefer the interests of England to the interests of Ireland, was, they felt, the best thing that they were likely to get. But the north-east corner of Ireland was very differently situated from the rest of the island. The inhabitants were mostly Protestants, Englishmen and Scotchmen who had come over and settled on lands that had formerly belonged to the natives. Many of

them were sons of Cromwell's soldiers; some of the old men among them had actually fought under him. They hated King James as much as did any one in England, probably hated him more, because they would be certain to lose more, if he should succeed.¹

The chief town in this portion of Ireland was Londonderry, and Londonderry refused to submit to King James. Thousands of Protestants from the country round, and from more distant parts of Ireland, flocked into it for shelter. It was only there and in Enniskillen that a Protestant's life and property were safe. Unfortunately, Londonderry itself was in danger. The walls by which it was defended had never been very strong, and they had been allowed to get out of repair. The supply of food was very small, while there were a great many more people than usual to be provided for. Worst of all, the governor, one Colonel Lundy, was bent on giving the place up to King James. We cannot say whether he was a traitor or a coward, but it is certain that he did his best to discourage the garrison and the inhabitants. The city, he said, could not possibly hold out, and the best thing that could be done was to make terms with

¹ The Irish Parliament had already passed one Act taking away a large part of the property owned by Protestants, and another which condemned to death, without trial, nearly every Protestant above the rank of a shopkeeper or an artisan.

the besiegers. On April 14 two regiments arrived. They had been sent from England to strengthen the garrison. Lundy told the colonel who commanded them that it would be useless for him to land his soldiers. The place could not be defended, and there was not food enough even for the garrison that it had already. He and his regiments had better go back to England at once. After speaking in this way to



LONDONDERRY CATHEDRAL.

the colonel privately, Lundy called a council of war, from which, however, he took pains to shut out any officer that wished to resist. The council decided to surrender, and a messenger was sent to King James to say that Londonderry would be peaceably given up to him, as soon as it should be summoned.

This decision was not at all to the liking of the inhabitants. Even the soldiers refused to obey their

commander. The gates were shut ; the guns upon the walls were manned. When King James, who felt sure that the city would be surrendered to him, rode with his staff near one of the gates, a cannon-shot was fired at the party, and killed an officer by the King's side. Two governors were chosen by the principal inhabitants, one of them a soldier, Baker by name, who was to look after military affairs, the other, an old clergyman, the Rev. George Walker, Rector of Donaghmore, who was to manage matters in the city itself, and issue the allowances of food. King James still hoped to gain the town. He sent a trumpeter with a message to know when the agreement which Governor Lundy had made to surrender would be carried out. The man was told that the people of Londonderry had nothing to do with Governor Lundy's agreements, and that they were determined to resist to the last. Another envoy, an Irish noble, came the following day. Murray, the colonel of one of the regiments, rode out to meet him. "I am to offer," said the envoy, "a free pardon to all the citizens of Londonderry, and to you a colonel's commission and a thousand pounds." The answer was—"The citizens of Londonderry have done nothing that requires a pardon, and have no sovereign but King William and Queen Mary." The envoy was advised to depart at once and not to come again.

After this the siege was begun in earnest. The town was bombarded, with no little damage to the houses and some loss of life. At first this caused much dismay, but the inhabitants got used to it, as men will get used to anything. On April 21 the besieged made a sally, and a fierce fight followed, in which a French general, who had the command of King James' army, was killed. They made another about a fortnight later, in which another French officer of high rank received a wound, which, not many days after, for want of skill in the doctors, caused his death. For several weeks after this fighting went on, and, on the whole, the men of Londonderry had the best of it, taking both prisoners and flags from the enemy. Then Hamilton, who, after the Frenchman's death, had succeeded to the chief command of the army, ordered an assault to be made. The point to be attacked was a spot called Windmill Hill, near the southern gate. A forlorn hope, consisting of men who had taken an oath to make their way into the town or die in the attempt, was led by a certain Captain Butler to the attack. The besieged received them, drawn up in three lines, the men who stood behind loading the muskets of those who stood in front. The struggle was long and fierce. The Irish fought bravely, but they could not drive the defenders from their place. The women of Londonderry were busy serving out powder and shot

to their husbands and relatives. A few of the attacking party managed to climb the wall where it was lowest, but they were all killed or taken prisoners. When the besiegers had lost four hundred men, they were ordered by their commanding officer to fall back.

As the town could not be taken by storm, there was nothing left but to blockade and starve it out. It was easy enough to do this by land, but there was the river, by which English ships could pass up to the town with food. True, there were forts and batteries, but these might be passed at night, or, indeed, with some risk at other times. The besiegers, therefore, proceeded to barricade the river. They sank boats loaded with stones, drove stakes into the bottom of the stream, and tied heavy logs of wood together with cables a foot thick. They thus made a boom or fence right across the river. Until this was broken, nothing could pass, and Londonderry was shut off from all help. The brave men who were holding Enniskillen would have been glad to help if it had been possible, but they were not strong enough to do more than harass the outside of the enemy's camp. Meanwhile, inside the walls, the famine grew worse and worse. There was no flesh but horseflesh, and very little of that; the wretched people were glad to have a little tallow doled out to them. At last, on June 15, when the siege had lasted nearly two months,

there was some hope of relief. The sails of ships could be seen from the top of the Cathedral tower. These ships were in Lough Foyle, an arm of the sea, as it may be called, into which the Londonderry river runs; and they were, without doubt, the squadron that had come from England to relieve the town. Shortly after, a messenger, who had dived under the boom, brought the news. The ships were carrying men, ammunition, and, above all, food. Londonderry was to be relieved.

So men hoped, but it was long before the hope was fulfilled. The officer who commanded the squadron did not think it safe to approach. He had not men enough to attack the enemy's lines; he was afraid to charge the boom with his ships. For weeks he lay in Lough Foyle doing nothing.

Famine, and the fever which always follows famine, were busy in the town. Many died, among them Governor Baker; those who survived were so weak that they could hardly bear arms. Yet the brave people of Londonderry held out. They even endured what must have been not less hard to bear than hunger and disease—the sight of their own countrymen dying of starvation under the walls of their town. The command of the siege had been handed over to Rosen, a Russian officer in the French service. This man drove a number of old men, women, and children

from the country round up to the walls. The besieged, he thought, must either take them in, and so have more to feed, or must see them die before their eyes. The townsmen, by way of answer, put up gibbets on the wall, and declared that, unless these poor creatures were allowed to go away, they would hang the prisoners whom they had in their hands. Rosen held out for two days before he gave way; many had died during this time.

King James now took the chief command away from Rosen, and the siege went on more vigorously than ever. The cannons never ceased to fire; one of the gates was beaten in; a breach was made in the walls. Still the brave men of Londonderry repaired by night the damage that had been done by day, and this though they were so weak for want of food that they could hardly stand. For, of course, as the weeks went by, the famine grew worse and worse. Of proper food hardly any was left. There was a store of salted hides, meant to be made into leather; these the soldiers and others gnawed, and so were able to stay their hunger a little. Dogs and rats were greedily eaten when they could be caught; there was even talk of making a meal off human flesh. And all this time the people could see the ships in Lough Foyle, and knew that if they could come up the river there would be plenty of food for all.

Colonel Kirke, who was in command of the fleet, ought to have made the attempt to force the passage as soon as he came. He now received a command which he dared not disobey, that it must be made at all risks and without delay. The master of one of the merchantmen now went to Kirke, and offered to run his ship, the *Mountjoy*, against the boom, on the chance of breaking it down. His name was Micaiah Browning, and he was a native of Londonderry. The offer was accepted, as also another made by Andrew Douglas, master of the *Phænix*. The two ships sailed up the river from Lough Foyle, and with them was a frigate, carrying 36 guns, the *Dartmouth*, commanded by Captain John Leake. At sunset, on July 28, these three came up the river from Lough Foyle. The tide was flowing, but the water was still very low, and the channel by which they had to pass was close to the left bank of the river, where the besiegers had made batteries on which many guns were mounted. A sharp cannonade was kept up on the vessels from the shore, to which the *Dartmouth* did its best to reply. When they came to the boom, the *Mountjoy* charged it. The ship had all its sails set, and was carried on by the force of the tide, and the boom could not stand the force of the blow, but broke. Still, the shock to the *Mountjoy* was so great that she was driven back into the mud. The Irish soldiers on the

bank raised a great shout, got into their boats, and prepared to board. But the frigate came to the rescue, pouring such a broadside on them that they were thrown into confusion. Meanwhile, the *Phoenix* dashed at the opening which the *Mountjoy* had made, and passed safely through the boom. The *Mountjoy* too was soon floated off by the rising tide, and followed her companion ship, without suffering much injury, though her brave captain was killed, struck by a shot from one of the batteries. By ten o'clock the two ships had reached the quay. As it was sunset when they came up to the boom, and the sun does not set so far north on July 28 till past nine o'clock, not much time had been lost. But short as it was, this time had been one of terrible suspense to the townsfolk. Now all their troubles were over ; an ample supply of food was distributed to every one ; nor did it trouble any one that the guns of the besiegers went on thundering throughout the night. They lit bonfires on the walls, and rang out a merry peal from the bells of the churches. For two days more the besiegers kept up the cannonade ; on the night of July 31 they burnt their camp and marched away.

CHAPTER IX.

BLLENHEIM AND AFTER.

IT is easy to understand that when it seemed likely that the two great kingdoms of France and Spain¹ would be united in the hands of the same ruler, the other nations of Europe would see danger to themselves. After much trouble an arrangement was made, by which it was provided that France and Spain should not be so united. But Louis XIV., though he had agreed to it, refused to abide by it. Hence began what is called "The War of the Spanish Succession." Some of the European nations joined in a "Grand Alliance" to resist the ambition of the French king. It is not certain that England would have joined it, though King William III. was anxious that it should, but for one thing. When James II. of England was dying, his wife prevailed upon Louis XIV. to

¹ It must be remembered that Spain was much more powerful than it is now; it possessed the Spanish Netherlands (about corresponding to Belgium), Milan and the territory round it, Naples and Sicily, and a very large region in Central and South America.

promise that he would recognize his son as King of England. Accordingly, no sooner was King James dead (Sept. 6, 1701) than his son¹ was proclaimed King of England under the title of James III. The English people were greatly enraged, and King William had no more difficulty in persuading them to follow his advice. He himself died half-a-year later (March 8, 1702), but his death made no change in English policy. John Churchill, whom William III. had made Earl of Marlborough, was appointed Commander-in-Chief. He had done his best, or worst, to injure William, but he was a great general, and the King, when he was dying, recommended him to the Princess Anne, who was to succeed, as the very best man that she could find to carry on the war.

It was no easy matter to get together an army. Men who had been put into prison for debt—and in those days, and indeed for long after, debtors were treated with the greatest cruelty—were released if they were willing to serve. Recruits were even taken from the prisons. Vagrants and tramps were compelled to enlist. Even then the proper number of men could not be found. But in Germany there were many who were willing to become soldiers. During the last century there had been so much fighting that the labourers had been obliged to become soldiers.

¹ See Chapter XI.



THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH AS A YOUNG ENSIGN.

It was useless to cultivate fields which might be ravaged any day. In fact, service in the army was for many the only livelihood that they could follow. Then again, the small German princes were glad to hire out their subjects as soldiers to States that were willing to pay for them.

Marlborough went to Holland in May 1702, and was made Commander-in-Chief of the Dutch army. Various German princes, the Elector of Hanover, afterwards George I. of England, among them, joined him. He had altogether about 60,000 men. But it was difficult to manage an army made up of so many States; and still more difficult to manage their rulers, each of whom had his own interests to look after. That year various towns were taken, of which Liège was the most important. A very great misfortune had very nearly happened to the Allies. As Marlborough was on his way down the river Maas to the Hague, his barge was taken by some French soldiers. An old servant who was with him slipped into his hand a French pass which had been given some time before to his brother. The Frenchmen were deceived and let him go.

It would take long to describe what was done in the course of the next year (1703). Marlborough was continually hindered by the Dutch. A committee of Dutch Councillors went about with him, and he had

always to consult them. They were cautious, even, one may say, timid, and unwilling to run any risk. Some of Marlborough's best schemes were spoilt because they were afraid to give their consent. It may be said that, on the whole, the Allies made no great advance. Marlborough resolved that the next year should not be lost in the same way. He marched into South Germany, and at the beginning of July had reached Würtemberg. He had, as I have said, a curiously mixed army; but there were no troops so much admired as the English. "These gentlemen all look as if they were dressed for a ball," said one of the German Princes to an English General. On August 2 Marlborough stormed a strong place called the Schellenberg. He lost 4500 men in doing it, but of the enemy's garrison of 12,000 only 3000 escaped. Many were drowned in attempting to swim the river that stopped their flight; still more were drowned by the breaking of the bridge that had been made across it. Eleven days later came the great battle of Blenheim. That it was to be a great battle every one felt. Marlborough, who had received the Holy Communion before dawn, cried, as he mounted his horse—"This day I conquer or die."

The army of the Allies consisted of 52,000 men; about two-thirds being under the immediate command of Marlborough. The rest were led by Prince Eugène

of Savoy. The French, on the other hand, had about 56,000 men; Marshal Tallard was in chief command, and seems to have shown a strange want of skill, and even of common care. In the first place, he did not know that the Allied army was so near him; secondly, he did not know how strong it was, thinking, in particular, that Prince Eugène had indeed joined Marlborough, but had not brought an army with him. Then he had not taken any trouble in protecting his position. His camp had a river in front of it and between him and the Allies. He took it for granted that it was too deep to ford, because it had been so in October, whereas it was now August. There was a bridge over it, but this he neither broke down nor fortified. There were two mills upon it; these he did not take the trouble to occupy. Finally, he left a large space between his camp and the river, in which the enemy, if he got across the river, would find ample space to draw up his army. Of course he ought to have moved his troops right up to the bank, so that the Allies would have to meet them as soon as they should get out of the water.

On the right of the French position was the village of Blenheim. By some blunder, a great body of French troops was shut up in this place. A great part of it was protected by the two rivers, the Danube and the Nebel, which flows into it; the rest was

strongly fortified. Four thousand men would have been quite sufficient to guard it, but there were more than three times as many, so closely packed together that many of them could hardly use their guns.

Marlborough kept his army waiting till Prince Eugène on the right could reach his proper position (he had to make his way by a long circuit). This was not done till one o'clock (you will remember that the troops began to move at dawn). When this was signalled, the advance was ordered. On the left, General Cutts, nicknamed the "Salamander,"¹ attacked the village of Blenheim. But this place was held too strongly to be taken. The Allies suffered considerable loss in the attack, and Marlborough sent word to General Cutts that he must be content to keep the garrison of the village occupied without exposing his own men more than could be helped. On the right, Prince Eugène's troops, who were greatly fatigued by their long march,—much longer than that of any other part of the army,—could make no impression on the enemy. The Danes, Dutch, and Hanoverians, who were between the Prince and Marlborough, did not fare any better. They were opposed to an Irish brigade in the service of the French king, and suffered great loss. Marlborough himself had to go to their

¹ A salamander is a kind of lizard which was once supposed to be able to live in the middle of fire.

help. When he had done this he prepared to make the great effort of the day. He had drawn up his cavalry, 8000 in number, on the slope of ground which went down from the French camp to the river. The river, it should be said, he had been allowed to cross without meeting with any opposition. He now gave the signal to charge. He was met with a heavy fire, which for a time threw his lines into disorder. If the French cavalry had taken advantage of the opportunity, the result of the day might have been different. But they did not move, though they were actually more numerous than the Allies. Marlborough, always calm, however great the danger, formed his lines again, and led them once more to the charge. As they came near the French squadrons, the latter broke and fled. The infantry, finding themselves deserted, followed their example, and in a very short time the centre of the French army had ceased to exist. The left, that portion which Prince Eugène had in vain attacked, withdrew in good order, without suffering much loss. But the right, the 14,000 men who were crowded into the village of Blenheim, were not so fortunate. They had made their position more difficult by setting fire to the village. When they attempted to escape, they were driven back. On the other hand, the Allies were not able to carry the barricades. The general in

command of the French saw that it was useless to resist any longer. He sent a messenger to ask for terms. The answer was that, by Marlborough's orders, they must surrender without conditions. It was hard for brave men to submit to such a disgrace, but there seemed no other course. The 14,000 men gave themselves up as prisoners. All that they could do was to burn or destroy their flags.

The loss of the French was very great, amounting in killed, wounded, and prisoners, to 40,000, or more than two-thirds of their army. The Allies had about 4500 killed, and 7500 wounded. The English numbered only about 9000 men, but it will have been seen that they had more than their full share in the fighting and in the victory.

In the next year (1705) little was done; Marlborough could not get the Dutch to move, and he could not move without them. But in 1706, another great victory, greater in some respects than Blenheim itself, was won. The French general, Marshal Villeroi, made the mistake of supposing that Marlborough had not yet got his army together, and put himself in the way of a battle which he ought to have done his best to avoid. He made another mistake in the position which he took up. His line of battle was curved like a bow, one may say, while Marlborough's army was like the string. The string is shorter than

the bow, and so Marlborough could bring more men, and more quickly to bear on any one point, than could Villeroi. Another thing that put the French commander at a disadvantage was this. He was made to believe that Marlborough intended to attack his left wing, and so strengthened it with troops which he had to take away from places where they were more wanted. The chief fighting of the day took place on the right wing. The English drove the French out of the little village of Tavière, and then charged the famous corps of Musketeers, which was posted behind it. They broke the first line, but were driven back by the second. Marlborough came to their aid with his cavalry—he always made a great use of cavalry—and compelled the Musketeers to retreat. Meanwhile a mound, called the Tomb of Ottomond, had been occupied with cannon, which swept the whole of the French line. The next thing was that the French left was attacked in the rear. This completed the rout. It was a great victory, and, to compare it with other battles, did not cost the conquerors very much, a few more than 3000 in killed and wounded. The French lost 8000 in killed and wounded. Nearly as many more, natives of the country, deserted, some going home, others joining the Allies. All the baggage fell into the hands of the English. Nearly all the Spanish Netherlands was lost to France by

this battle of Ramillies. "We have done in four days," Marlborough wrote to his wife at home, "what we should have thought ourselves happy if we could be sure of in four years."

A third great victory was won in 1708 at Oudenarde, and a fourth in 1709 at Malplaquet; but this last was a victory only in name; for though Marlborough drove the French from the field of battle, he lost 20,000 in killed and wounded, to 12,000 of the enemy.

CHAPTER X.

GOOD QUEEN ANNE AND HER SON.

ANNE was the younger of the two daughters of James II., by his first wife, Anne Hyde, daughter of the Earl of Clarendon. There were other children of the marriage, but these two only lived to grow up. Mary married William Prince of Orange, himself a grandson of Charles I., and reigned with him as joint sovereign till her death in 1694. It had been settled that if she left no children the crown should pass

to Anne, but that William should be king for the rest of his life. He lived till 1702, and then Anne succeeded.

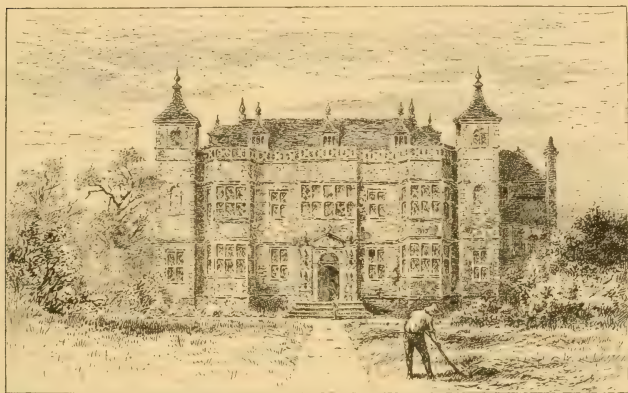
She had been married at nineteen to George, Prince of Denmark, a cousin of her own,¹ and had had many children, of whom one only, William Duke of Gloucester, lived beyond infancy. The Prince was born July 24, 1689, and grew up to be a very interesting child. He was weakly and ailing, for at four years of age he was scarcely able to walk without support, but he had plenty of life and cleverness. Indeed, the disease from which he suffered is one that often makes children seem older than their real age.² His chief amusement seems to have been playing at soldiers. He had a band of boys whom he called his "horse-guards," and he used to exercise them in the gardens of Campden House, in Kensington, where his father and mother resided. Young as he was, he had a very clear notion of his own importance. He knew, for instance, that he was heir to the throne, and ought to have honours shown to him. One

¹ He was great-nephew of her great-grandmother, Anne of Denmark, wife of James I., *i. e.* second cousin, one degree removed.

² It was water on the brain. We are told that his head was so large that his hat was big enough for most men, and that it was difficult to find a wig to fit him. It is curious to hear of a child of four wearing a wig.

day when King William came to inspect his boy soldiers, and he had promised that the King should have them to help him in his war against the French, he turned to Queen Mary and asked, "Why does not my mamma have guards as well as you?" Anne had had her guards taken from her by the King and Queen, with whom she was on very bad terms. The Duke's little soldiers seem to have been very ill-behaved, giving themselves the airs of grown men, and taking what they pleased from the houses round, just as if the place belonged to them. The poor child seems to have been foolishly treated by his father on the one side, who wanted to harden him by rough amusements for which he was not strong enough, and, on the other, by his mother and her ladies with their petting. In January 1696 the King gave the young Duke the Order of the Garter, and did him the honour of buckling it on with his own hands. "Are you not glad to have this?" some one asked him. "I am gladder of the King's favour," was the wise answer of the prudent little boy. In the summer of this year he was taken for the first time to Windsor, which his mother had now for a summer residence. Four boys from Eton School, one of them the son of the Duke of Marlborough, of whom you have read in Chapter IX., were sent for to be his playfellows. He immediately

ordered a sham fight, in which they were to take part. In the course of their wars he got a scratch on the arm from a sword, but said nothing about it till the fight was over, when he asked whether there was a surgeon at hand. On July 24 he was present at a "chapter" or meeting of the Knights of the



CAMPDEN HOUSE.

Garter, and sat down with the grown men who were his companions at the great banquet of the day. Not long afterwards, when a plot for the murder of the King had been discovered, the Duke sent him an address, in which he declared that he was his Majesty's most dutiful subject, and had rather lose his life in his Majesty's cause than in any one else's.

His eleventh birthday was kept with much rejoicing. He reviewed his boy regiment, had a great exhibition of cannon and fireworks, and sat at the head of the table at a grand banquet. The next day he complained of sickness, headache, and sore throat. The family doctor was called in, and, after the common fashion of the day, bled him. This naturally did him more harm than good. Dr. Radcliffe, who had the reputation of being the most skilful physician of the age, was sent for in haste. When he came, he pronounced the boy to be suffering from scarlet fever, and asked who had bled him. The doctor in attendance owned that it had been done by his orders. "Then," said Dr. Radcliffe, "you have destroyed him, and you may finish him, for I will not prescribe." On July 30, 1700, five days after his birthday, the Duke died.

Queen Anne herself is not so interesting a person as her little son. Great events happened in her reign, and there never was a time in English history more distinguished for great men, soldiers, statesmen, and writers. But she herself had no greatness about her. She was weak and fickle, ruled first by one favourite, then by another. In the early part of her reign it was the wife of the Duke of Marlborough that was in power, so to speak. The two used to write to each other under the names of Mrs. Morley (the

Queen) and Mrs. Freeman (the Duchess). But the Duchess was a very haughty and self-willed person, and in the end the Queen tired of her. After many angry letters and conversations, a final quarrel took place, and the Queen's favour was transferred to Lady Masham, who had once, as Abigail Hill, held a quite humble post in the household. There was, indeed, something political as well as much that was personal in these changes. The Duchess of Marlborough was on the side of the Whigs, Lady Masham on the side of the Tories.

Why she has been called *Good Queen Anne* it is not very difficult to see. As long as King William lived, she had the advantage of being compared with him. William was a remarkably cold, ungracious person, unlucky as a soldier, and getting little credit even for his good qualities. Anne, who was always kindly and good-humoured, was popular by contrast. And then, as has been said, she had the good fortune to be served by great men. William scarcely ever won a victory, though he was both skilful and brave; Anne had not a little of Marlborough's glory reflected upon her. She was disposed to be generous, though indeed real generosity is not easy for a person who has never any occasion to deny herself. Still, she was ready to give away, and did not care either to save money or spend it upon herself. Her allowance as Queen

was smaller than that enjoyed by any Sovereign either before or after. Her name is preserved by what is called Queen Anne's Bounty. In the second year of her reign she gave certain sums of money, which used to be part of the revenue of the Crown, to be used for increasing small livings of the Church of England. It may, of course, be said that in this she was scarcely giving away money of her own ; still, it was a kindly thought that prompted the act, and when she did it she was moved by the belief that she was helping the Church.

She and her sister have been greatly blamed for their conduct to their father, King James. They were, it has been said, most undutiful children. Yet it is difficult to say how they could have acted otherwise than they did. They could not refuse to reign when the country demanded that they should, and if their father was banished for his misdeeds, that was not their fault.

CHAPTER XI.

THE '15.

THE word "Jacobites" means "friends or followers of James." Many people thought that the Stuart family ought not to have been driven from the throne. They believed that a king had the right to reign whatever he might do, or whatever he might be. These were the real Jacobites. Then there were many who were ready to help them because for various reasons it suited them to do so. There were the Roman Catholics, for instance, who wanted to have a king of their own way of thinking. There were, again, the Scotch Highlanders, who did not like being under the rule of any but their own chiefs, and hoped, besides, to get something for themselves by a war, the country which they were going to invade being much richer than their own. And there were some people who, being very badly off, hoped to get some profit out of a change of Government. Some even of the great nobles who had had much to do with driving the Stuarts out of the kingdom, began to consider

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whether it would not be well to have them back again. They did not get as much as they wanted, or thought they ought to have, from the new King. Perhaps if they brought back the old one, he might give them more.

In the year 1700 Parliament passed what was called the "Act of Settlement." On July 30 the young Duke of Gloucester died, and there was then no one to come after Queen Anne. Accordingly it was settled by this Act that if, as seemed likely, the Queen should leave no children, the throne should go to the family of Sophia, wife of the Elector of Hanover. This lady was the daughter of Elizabeth, who, again, was the daughter of King James I. There were other persons who had a better right to succeed—the Duchess of Savoy, for instance, who was a grand-daughter of Charles I.; but the choice was a good one, one great reason being that the family were Protestants. But during the latter years of Queen Anne's reign, the Jacobites were very busy trying to set this arrangement aside. The Queen disliked the Hanover family very much, and would have been pleased that her brother should succeed her, anyhow if he would consent to become a Protestant.¹ If she

¹ Anne was the daughter of James II. by his first wife, Anne Hyde, daughter of Lord Clarendon; James Edward, commonly called "The Old Pretender," and the "Chevalier St. George,"

had lived longer, the Jacobites might have succeeded, but she died rather suddenly, and the Elector of Hanover, son of the Electress Sophia, was proclaimed King, with the title of George I., without any opposition.

Still, there were many people in the country who did not like the idea of having a German king, one, too, who could not speak a word of English, and the Jacobites were not willing to let the opportunity pass without trying to bring about a change.

The Queen had died on August 1, 1714. Some of the friends of the Stuarts were for proclaiming the Chevalier St. George as James III., but no one had the courage to do so, and for a time it seemed as if nothing would be done. But on August 2, 1715, the Earl of Mar, who the day before had congratulated King George on the anniversary of his succession, left London to raise an insurrection in the Highlands. A few friends went with him. They were disguised as sailors, and pretended to be part of the crew of a small collier. In about a fortnight's time he reached his house in Aberdeenshire, and from there sent out invitations for what was called a great

was his son by his second wife, Mary of Modena. James died in 1701. His death was a great advantage to the Jacobites, for he had been very unpopular, while nothing was known against his son.

hunting party, but was really a council of war. A number of Highland noblemen and gentlemen attended, and promised to raise all the troops they could collect. On September 6 Lord Mar raised the standard of "King James, Eighth of Scotland and Third of England," at the village of Kirkmichael. No more than sixty men were present, and these were much disturbed to see the gold ball at the top of the standard fall off. But this small band soon increased. Clan after clan joined it, and before the end of the month nearly all the country north of the Tay had risen for King James.

In the south of England, the Jacobites could do nothing at all. The Government put the chief men belonging to the party in prison, and so frightened the others that when the Duke of Ormond, who was to lead the insurrection in that part of the country, came over, he did not find a single person to join him. But in the north, where their party was much stronger, they rose, with a gentleman of Northumberland of the name of Forster for their leader. They were joined before long by a party from the southwest of Scotland, led by Lord Kenmure, and afterwards by two thousand men under a certain Brigadier MacIntosh. MacIntosh had been sent by Lord Mar to seize Edinburgh. This he was not able to do. Accordingly he marched south, crossed the Border

into England, and joined his forces with those led by Mr. Forster and Lord Kenmure. It was but a small army, scarcely more than two thousand men in all. It defeated, however, almost without having to strike a blow, a hasty levy of ten thousand men, with which the Bishop of Carlisle and Lord Lonsdale sought to stop their advance. This was at Penrith. The army then advanced into Lancashire, where its numbers were greatly increased. The new-comers, however, were but poorly armed, some of them having neither swords nor muskets, but only pitchforks and scythes.

The end of this expedition was very inglorious indeed. The Jacobites took up their position at Preston, and if they had been under a capable leader, they might have made a long resistance. But Mr. Forster, who was in command, seems to have had no skill in war, and no courage. He did nothing to defend the approaches to Preston, especially the bridge over the Ribble. This was so important that when the English general saw that it was not occupied, he felt quite sure that the Jacobites must have left the town. Even then the place was not easily taken. The English troops—there were not more than a thousand of them—attacked it, but were beaten back. In spite of this success, Forster insisted on treating for surrender. The next day the army laid down their arms. Many had taken the

opportunity of escaping, but 1400 prisoners gave themselves up. This took place on November 13.

On the very same day the insurrection in Scotland also came to an end, though this end was not quite so discreditable. The English Government had given the command here to the Duke of Argyll, chief of the powerful clan of the Campbells, and a man of great ability. Lord Mar, on the contrary, was about as poor a general as Mr. Forster. He stopped in Perth doing nothing; whereas, if he had only bestirred himself, he might, it is possible, have gained over the whole of Scotland. At length, on November 10, he marched southward. More men joined him as he went, till he had about ten thousand in all, but they were a very mixed and rough multitude, ill-armed, and with little or no discipline. The Duke of Argyll, on the other hand, had between three and four thousand men, but they were all regular troops. The two armies met on a tract of open country, near Dumb-lane, known by the name of Sheriffmuir.

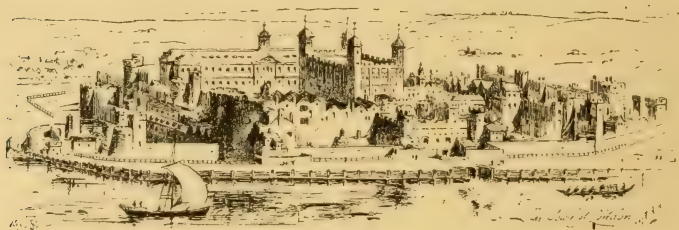
The Duke of Argyll was on the right wing of the loyal army. The enemy opposite supposed themselves to be protected by a marsh that lay between the two armies, but the Duke reckoned that the ground would be hardened by the frost that had happened in the night, and sent some of his cavalry across it. He followed with the rest, and charged the Jacobites

so fiercely as to break their line. They gave way, and were forced back to the river Allan, which was three miles in their rear ; many were drowned in attempting to cross the stream. This part of the Jacobite army was nearly destroyed.

Meanwhile things had been going very differently on the other side of the field. The Highlanders under Lord Mar, enraged by the death of the Chief of Clanronald, who had fallen by the first volley fired from the English ranks, made a furious charge. They thrust aside the soldiers' bayonets with their targets or shields, struck fiercely with their broadswords, and in a few minutes completely routed the English left wing. The English general fled from the field as fast as he could gallop, and did not stop till he found himself in Stirling. If the victorious Highlanders had followed up their success, they might have gained a complete victory. But there were divisions among them. What remained of the centre and left of the English army was able to join the Duke. Even then, as Argyll was leading his troops in view of the rebel army, they might have been scattered by a single charge. But Mar did nothing, and even retreated. The Duke, on the other hand, remained on the field of battle, and had some reason to claim the victory.

But whoever it was that won or lost this battle,

there was no more fighting. The Pretender himself, it is true, landed in Scotland on December 22. He bestowed some honours on his followers, named a council, issued some proclamations, and fixed a day for his coronation. But his cause was really hopeless. It had been expected by his followers that he would bring an army with him. But he came almost alone. Louis XIV., who had promised to help him, had died a few months before, and the French Government was



THE TOWER OF LONDON.

not now friendly to him. He had himself expected to find a great number of men ready to follow him, and he saw only a few hundreds. It was clearly useless to do anything more. On February 4 he left Scotland. A few days afterwards, what was left of the army dispersed. The leaders and officers fled from the country—Lord Mar had gone with the Pretender—the soldiers returned to their own homes.

The English Government did not behave with any great severity to its prisoners. The most important

of these were the noblemen who had surrendered at Preston. Six of these pleaded guilty. Of the six, three were reprieved; two, the Earls of Derwentwater and Kenmure, were executed, and one, Lord Nithisdale, escaped from the Tower of London, through the courage of his wife. This lady had tried in vain all possible means of obtaining mercy for her husband. On the evening before the day appointed for his execution, she visited his cell, taking two women with her, to bid good-bye, as was supposed, to the condemned man. One of them had upon her a second set of clothes. In these the Earl was dressed; his face and hair were disguised; and he passed out unsuspected by the guard.

Of the other insurgents but few were executed, and among these were certain half-pay officers, who were considered, not without reason, to be specially guilty.

CHAPTER XII.

THE '45.

IN the '15, the Prince for whom the Jacobites risked or lost their lives and property did not show himself till all the fighting was over. I am now going

to tell the story of the '45; we shall see that things were very different. It was the Prince who began the insurrection; if he had not come, it never would have been made.

I must first say who this Prince was. In 1719 the "Old Pretender," of whom you heard in the last chapter, married Clementina Sobieski, daughter of the King of Poland. In 1721 a son was born, who was named Charles Edward, and is commonly known as the "Young Pretender." It was he who was the hero of the '45.

On July 13 he set sail from Belle Isle, which is in the north of the Bay of Biscay. He had with him two French ships of war; the larger, the *Elizabeth*, carried the stores which he had been able to collect; in the smaller, *La Doutelle*, he himself sailed with a few companions. On their way they fell in with a British man-of-war, the *Lion*. A fierce fight took place between the *Elizabeth* and the *Lion*, in which both ships were so much injured that they had to put back into harbour. *La Doutelle* took no part in the fight, though the Prince was anxious to do so. Accordingly he was able to proceed on his voyage, but his stores were left behind in the *Elizabeth*. On July 27 he landed on a small island among the Hebrides. At first he found the chiefs anything but eager to take up arms, for

they thought that there was but little chance of success.

But the Prince persuaded many who began by



THE YOUNG PRETENDER.

refusing to join him. He was a tall and handsome young man, who charmed every one that came near him. One of the most powerful chiefs in the High-

lands, Cameron of Lochiel, felt quite sure the attempt must fail. The Prince sent for him. On his way he saw his brother, and told him where he was going, and what he should say. "Don't go," said the brother, "write to him. I know you better than you know yourself. If this Prince once sets eyes upon you, he will make you do whatever he pleases." And so it was. For some time Lochiel stood firm. But when the Prince, after a long argument, finished by saying, "Charles Stuart is come over to claim the crown of his ancestors or perish in the attempt; Lochiel, who, my father has often told me, was our firmest friend, may stay at home, and learn from the newspapers the fate of his Prince," he gave way and promised his help. If Lochiel had stood firm, there would have been no war.

On August 16 the first fighting took place. Two companies of soldiers on their way to Fort William were taken prisoners. Two days afterwards the Royal standard was raised at Glenfinnan. Men continued to flock in from various Highland clans. When the Prince set out on the following day on his march southward he had 1600 men with him.

On August 16 General Cope, who was in command of the English troops, set out from Edinburgh, intending to march to Fort Augustus. He had got as far as Dalwhinnie, which is about fifty miles

north of Perth, when he heard that the Highlanders had occupied a strong pass between that place and the Fort. He then gave up his plan, and marched to Inverness. The Prince, finding that there was no one to hinder him, marched south. As he went on, chiefs and nobles continued to join him, nor did he meet any resistance, except a few cannon shot which were fired from Stirling Castle. On September 14 he was only a few miles from Edinburgh. This city was really without defence. The walls were scarcely higher or stronger than a common garden wall, and had no cannon mounted on them; there were no regular troops, except some dragoons, and these soon showed that they could not be trusted. General Cope's army was, it is true, on its way back; but it was doubted whether it could arrive in time. While the magistrates were debating whether they should resist or surrender, Lochiel with his Camerons made his way within the walls without having to strike a blow. Thus, on September 17, the Prince became possessed of Edinburgh. At noon James VIII. was proclaimed king at the Cross, and shortly after the Prince took possession of Holyrood Palace. Only the Castle still remained in the power of the English Government.

On the same day that the Prince entered Edinburgh General Cope landed his army at Dunbar. The next day he marched northward; the Prince, on the other

hand, marched southward, and on September 20 the two armies met. They were nearly equal in number, about 2500 on each side, but Cope's troops were better armed, and had six cannon. The Highlanders had no cannon, and many of the men were without fire-arms.

The battle lasted but a few minutes. The Highlanders shouted, each clan its own war-cry, and ran furiously forward. They came first to the cannon. The sailors who served them fled without waiting to be attacked. Colonel Gardiner, who commanded the dragoons on the left wing, led them to the charge, but they would not follow him. As soon as the Highlanders drew their broadswords and came on, the men turned and fled. Very much the same thing happened with the other regiment of dragoons on the other wing. So the infantry was left without either guns or cavalry to support them. They stood firm for awhile, and fired a volley on the enemy. But the Highlanders rushed upon them, thrust aside their bayonets with their targets, and broke up their line. The dragoons for the most part got away, for there was no cavalry to follow them, but of the infantry nearly all were killed or taken prisoners. The Highlanders lost about a hundred men in killed and wounded. Such was the battle of Prestonpans or Gladsmuir.

Some of his friends now advised the Prince to march without delay into England, and even make his way to London; but most of them were against this plan. If he would wait awhile, they said, great numbers more would join him. As it was, he had fewer soldiers with him than he had before the battle, for many of the Highlanders had gone back to their homes in the mountains with the plunder which they had collected. Indeed, at one time, he had no more than 1500 men left. Nevertheless, it might have been better for him if he had hurried on at once.

It was quite true, however, that great numbers were ready to join him. Every day recruits flocked in both from the Highlands and the Lowlands. In the course of a few weeks as many as 6000 men were collected. The officers did their best to drill them, and give them proper arms, but it was impossible to make them into a regular army.

The great question now was—what was to be done? Should they stop in Scotland, or advance into England? The Prince was for advancing. If he was to keep Scotland he must conquer England. And, beyond all doubt, he was quite right. But most of his advisers did not think so. What they hoped to see was a Scottish kingdom under a Stuart king, and they were altogether against any attempt upon England. But the Prince was determined to go. “I see,

gentlemen, you are determined to stay in Scotland and defend your country, but I am not less resolved to try my fate in England, though I should go alone."

Then the chiefs gave way. On October 31 the Prince left Edinburgh. Eight days later the army crossed the Border. The Highlanders gave a great shout as they passed into England, but it was thought to be a very unlucky sign that Lochiel, in drawing his broadsword, cut his hand. Carlisle was besieged and taken with very little loss, one Highlander being killed and another wounded. The Prince entered Carlisle on November 17. Again there was the question whether he should return to Scotland or proceed further into England. The Prince was determined to go on, but many of his men left him. When he reached Penrith only 4500 of his 6000 remained.¹ Everywhere as he passed he found the people curious to see him, and even ready to cheer. But there were very few willing to help. At Manchester, two or three hundred men enlisted; but, on the whole, Lancashire was far less zealous for the cause than it had been thirty years before. There were, indeed, some zealous friends. One old lady, who had been held up in her mother's arms eighty-five years before to see Charles II. land at Dover, and who had always devoted half her income to the cause, sold all her jewels and

¹ He had left a garrison of 200 in Carlisle.

brought the price to the Prince, saying, as she kissed his hand, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." But the people cared little for King James, though probably they cared no more for King George.

Still the Prince went on, and on December 11 entered Derby. But he went no further. There had been no rising of the English people in his favour, nor had a French army been landed to give him help, and his councillors declared that there was nothing left but to go back to Scotland. They had good reasons to give for their advice. The Prince had but 5000 men with him, and the forces of the English Government were at least six times as numerous. And then all his hopes of help had been disappointed. Yet it is quite certain that the Prince, who was still eager to go on, was right. And, indeed, London, which was only one hundred and twenty-seven miles distant, was in a great fright. The shops were shut, the banks were thronged by people drawing out all their money, and King George himself, it is said, put his most valuable property on shipboard. The day on which the news came that the Pretender was at Derby, and that there was no army between him and London, was long remembered as Black Friday.

But the experiment of advancing was, happily, not tried. "Happily," I say, because if it had succeeded, it

must have ended in a long civil war, for it is impossible to suppose that England would have been content to let the Stuarts rule again. Much against his will, the Prince consented to retreat. On December 20 his army crossed the Border again. Six days later it reached Glasgow. By this time it had dwindled down to just over 4000 men. But now it was increased again. Various nobles and chiefs had raised bodies of troops, and these all joined the Prince. When he reached Stirling he had as many as 9000 men.

The general in command of the English army was the Duke of Cumberland, the second son of King George II. But he had been called away to take charge of the forces on the south coast of England, which the French were preparing to invade. He appointed a certain General Hawley to act for him, and Hawley had marched to attack the Prince at Stirling. He halted at Falkirk, which is about ten miles to the south. There a battle was fought, and lost by the English, partly through the folly and neglect of their general. He despised his adversaries as being nothing better than an ill-armed mob, and was actually absent from his place when the battle began. The dragoons again behaved badly. They were ordered to charge the right wing of the enemy. But the Macdonalds who stood over against them kept back their fire till the horsemen were near them,

and then sent among them a destructive volley. Two of the regiments broke at once; the third stood firm for a while, but were soon compelled to retreat. Then the Macdonalds charged and fell on the flank of the infantry in the centre of the line, which was being attacked at the same time in front. The soldiers had been tired early in the day, by having to march through a storm of wind and rain, and were now numbed with standing still. They had little courage left, and, like the cavalry, turned to fly. The Prince's left wing had not done nearly so well; the English here were sheltered by some rough ground, and the Highlanders' attack was repulsed. Yet here, too, the English were forced to retreat. They could not stand their ground alone.

The conquerors did not make the best of their victory. If they had, they might have almost destroyed the defeated army. But they did not fully know what had happened, and besides, the light failed them. At that time of the year—the battle of Falkirk¹ was fought on January 17—the days are very short, and it is very dangerous, especially with untrained troops, to move in the dark. As it was, General Hawley lost 400 men killed, 100 prisoners, and all his artillery, ammunition, and

¹ In the latitude of Falkirk (56°), the sun sets little later than three o'clock. The battle did not begin till two o'clock.

baggage, and was also compelled to burn his tents, lest they should fall into the hands of the enemy. The Prince, however, got little real advantage from his victory. His officers quarrelled, blaming each other that the English had not been more vigorously pursued, and many of the Highlanders hurried home with their plunder. An unlucky accident that happened on the day after the battle also did him much harm. A gun which one of the Macdonalds was examining, went off and killed a son of Glengarry, who happened to be passing. The Glengarry clan insisted upon the man being put to death. Nor were they satisfied with this, for the greater part left the army and returned home. Not long after, the Prince was again compelled by his counsellors to retreat. On February 1 the army left Stirling, having first spiked the heavy guns and blown up the powder magazine. On the 18th of the month it reached Inverness. Here it was quartered for some eight weeks, growing weaker and weaker every day. The Prince could neither pay nor feed his army. The country about Inverness was so poor that he could get little from it, and most of the supplies which should have reached him by sea were captured by British ships. It was only to be expected that men who had neither food nor money to buy it with should grow tired of the service. By April 15 —on this day each man received nothing but a single

biscuit—the 9000 men whom the Prince had with him at Stirling had dwindled down to 5000. The English army under the Duke of Cumberland was nearly twice as numerous, consisting of 8000 infantry and 900 cavalry.

The Prince and his advisers planned a night attack on the Duke's army. It failed ; the troops started too late, many of them having straggled away in search of food, and moved too slowly, so that it was nearly dawn when they reached the English camp. They fell back, and took up the position which they had held before on Culloden Moor, otherwise Drum Mossie, tired by their useless march, and, as usual, hungry. The best officers in the army were for withdrawing to a stronger position, where the Duke would have to begin the attack, but the Prince had a strange idea that he was bound to fight where the ground gave no advantage to either side. Everything was against him, even the order of battle, for the Macdonalds were put on the left wing, and were so offended by the slight, as they thought it, that at a critical moment of the battle they refused to advance.

The battle began with a cannonade. This was also in favour of the English, whose guns were served by men that knew their business. Then the Highlanders of the right and centre charged. At first they did again what they had done before at Prestonpans and

at Falkirk, and broke the enemy's line. But the Duke had provided for this chance. Behind the first line was a second, three deep, the first rank kneeling, the second bending forward, the third standing upright. The line kept back its fire till the Highlanders were close, and then poured a heavy volley into them. Like other soldiers whose first charge is almost irresistible, they had little spirit left for a second. This part of the Prince's army was broken. On the left, as has been said, the Macdonalds refused to fight. Their chief advanced, but they would not follow him; they were not moved even when they saw him fall.

One more chance was left. If the Prince had charged with all that remained of his army, he might have even then changed the fortune of the day. He had often said that he would either conquer or die, and now was the time to keep his word. That he did not do so is certain; but it is not easy to say whether he was right or wrong. We do not even know for certain what he did. According to one account he was urged to charge and refused; according to another he was forced against his will from the field by two officers, who laid hold of his horse's bridle, exactly as his great-grandfather had been a hundred years before on the fatal field at Naseby.¹

I must now bring this chapter to an end. I am glad

¹ See p. 436.

to say nothing about the cruelty with which the Duke of Cumberland used his victory, and I must leave you to read elsewhere the romantic story of how the Prince escaped. Now hiding, now wandering about in disguise among the islands off the western coast, or on the mainland, he continued to avoid his pursuers for nearly half-a-year. Many helped him, some of them persons who did not favour his cause, but two must be specially mentioned, Flora Macdonald, of South Uist, and Macdonald of Kingsburgh. At length, on September 20, 1746, he embarked at the very spot where he had landed fourteen months before, and escaped to France.

CHAPTER XIII.

PLASSEY.

IN the year 1600 Queen Elizabeth gave a charter to a Company of Merchants under the title of "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies." For some time the East India Company, as it came to be called, was a very humble affair. It built, by leave of the native rulers

of India, factories or places for trade. But these were never safe from attack, either from the natives or from European rivals. The Dutch, for instance, in 1623 destroyed the factory of Amboyna, and murdered all its inhabitants. Nevertheless, the Company's power and wealth gradually increased. A factory was founded on the Hoogly river in 1642. This is now Calcutta. In 1661 Bombay was handed over to England as part of the dowry of the Portuguese princess, Catherine of Braganza, who became in that year the wife of Charles II. Madras, the chief city of the third of the three great divisions or presidencies, as they are called, was bought from an Indian Rajah or Prince for a yearly payment of £500.

In 1743 one Robert Clive received an appointment as "writer," *i.e.* clerk in the East India Company's factory at Madras. He was certainly not a good clerk; the work was not of a kind that he liked, and he neglected it, and he gave much trouble to his superiors. In 1747 he ceased to be a clerk and became a soldier. As a soldier he was to do his country such services as have never been surpassed. Many able statesmen and brave and skilful soldiers have helped to build up our great Indian Empire, but no one of them did more than Robert Clive, and very few did as much.

A Frenchman, Dupleix by name, had conceived

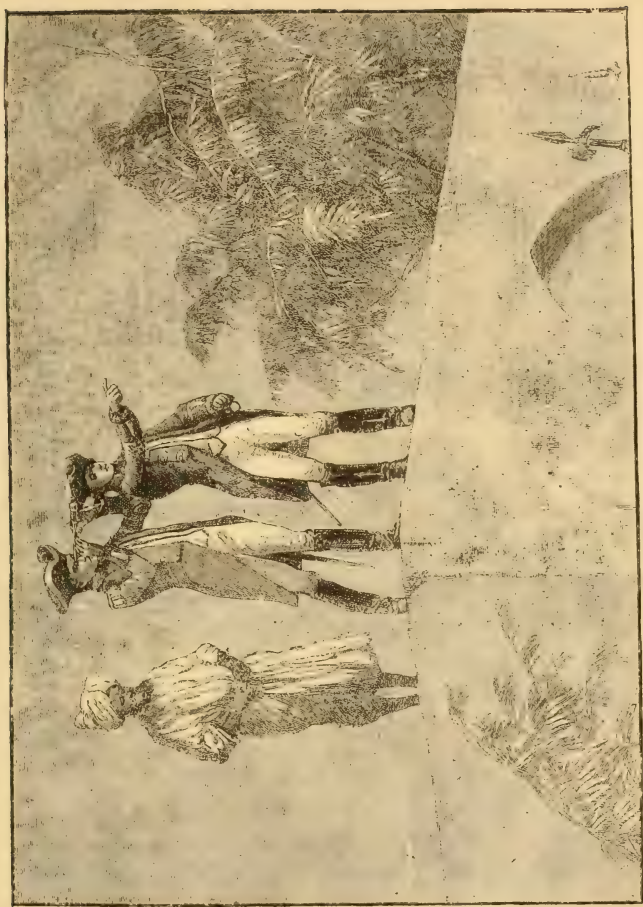
the idea of gaining India for France. To do this he had to conquer or persuade the Indian rulers, and also to drive out the English. For a time his plans seemed to prosper, but it was Clive who hindered them from being accomplished. He persuaded the Governor of Madras to allow him to occupy the fort of Arcot. The place seemed hardly capable of standing a siege. The walls were low, the towers upon it ruinous, the ditch half filled up. Clive did his best to strengthen these defences. Though he lost four of the eight officers who were serving under him, and though his garrison was at last reduced to 200 native troops¹ and 120 Europeans, he contrived to hold out for fifty days against an army of 10,000 men. The siege was raised, other victories were won, Dupleix was recalled to France, and the natives began to look to the English rather than to the French as the nation that could not be conquered.

This was in 1751. Five years later a terrible thing happened in another part of India. The Nawab of Bengal, Suraj-ud-Dowlah by name, picked a quarrel with the English at Calcutta, seized the town, and compelled the fort to surrender. The prisoners, one hundred and forty-six in number, were thrust into a chamber about twenty feet each way, afterwards

¹ Called "Sepoys." *Sipah* is a Persian word meaning "army," hence *sipahi*, a soldier, a sepoy.

known as the Black Hole. After a night of dreadful suffering from suffocation and thirst, only twenty-three were found alive next morning. The Government of Madras at once sent Clive to punish the Nawab for his wrong-doing, and to recover Calcutta. Calcutta he recovered without any difficulty, and won other victories so speedily, that the Nawab was compelled to ask for peace, and to give back to the English all that they had ever held in Bengal. But no sooner had the treaty been signed than the Nawab began to negotiate with the French. Clive saw at once what had to be done. The French would attempt in Bengal what Dupleix had attempted in Madras, and they must be stopped at all hazards. He began by seizing the French settlement of Chandernagore. This was an illegal act, for though France and England were at war, Chandernagore nominally belonged to the Nawab, and could not be taken without his permission. Nevertheless, Clive did it. He then made friends with two of the Nawab's most powerful subjects. One, Meer Jaffier by name, was to succeed the Nawab; the other, Omichund, was to be rewarded by a large sum of money.

The Nawab had collected an army of 50,000 men. Clive had 3000, of whom less than 1000 were English. The question was—should they fight? Meer Jaffier had promised to desert his master, but



CLIVE EXAMINING THE ENEMY'S LINES.

he might not keep his promise; he certainly would not unless Clive could make him feel sure that the English were going to win the day. A council of war was held. The majority was against fighting, and Clive, strange to say, was one of the majority. But a commander can always overrule the decision of a council, and Clive had to consider again what was to be done. He retired into a clump of trees, and there thought the matter out, with this result—that he determined to fight. The next morning he crossed the river, and marching during the day, found himself at night-fall within reach of the enemy's army.

The next day, June 23, the Nawab drew up his forces in order of battle. Clive's army was in front of a mango grove. He had one regiment, the 39th.¹ This he put in the centre, the native troops and the few small guns that he had being on either side. Cavalry he had none. The Nawab had 12,000, 36,000 infantry, and a number of heavy guns, some of them served by French artillerymen. The Nawab's guns opened fire with such effect that Clive had to withdraw into the mango grove, which was protected by mud-banks all round it. Here he intended to wait. At night he would attack the enemy's

¹ Now known as the Dorsetshire Regiment, and bearing, in memory of this victory, the motto *Primus in Indis*.

camp. While he waited a heavy storm of rain came on, and so spoilt the enemy's powder that the cannonade was almost stopped. The commander of the Nawab's cavalry, Meer Mudin, thinking that the English guns also were disabled, advanced to attack Clive's position. But the guns had been under cover, and fired a discharge of grape shot which drove the enemy back in confusion, Meer Mudin himself being killed. The Nawab, dismayed at this reverse, ordered his army to retreat into the camp, and himself fled from the field. Clive now advanced with his whole force. The French artillerymen offered a brave resistance, but there was no one to support them. As for the Nawab's infantry, they fled almost without waiting for a blow. The Nawab had deserted his army early in the day, and the rest of their leaders followed the example of their chief. Clive won the battle, and with it a vast extent of territory, at a cost of less than a hundred in killed and wounded. This was the first great victory of Plassey.

CHAPTER XIV.

QUEBEC.

JAMES WOLFE was the son of a soldier who had fought under Marlborough, and set his mind from his earliest days on being a soldier himself. In 1740, when he was only thirteen, he volunteered to join the expedition to Cartagena. Luckily, something prevented him from going, for the affair was a terrible failure, and many who went never came back. Two years afterwards, at an age when it is a rare thing for a boy to be in the head form of a public school, he received a commission, and carried the colours of his regiment when the King reviewed the troops at Blackheath. The following year (June 27) he fought at Dettingen, the last battle in which an English king actually led his troops. He not only fought, but distinguished himself, for in default of any older officer to take the place, he had to act as adjutant. After the battle, he was made lieutenant and adjutant, and the year following was promoted to be captain. Four years more saw him a major—he had been present meanwhile

at Falkirk and Culloden—and his regiment had the reputation of being the best drilled in the army.

From 1748 (the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle) to 1756 there was, in name at least, peace between England and France. But in North America the French and English settlers were at war. In 1755 George Washington, of whom I shall have to say much in the next chapter, fought a mixed force of Indians and French on the Ohio. The same year, General Braddock led some troops into the backwoods. Braddock, never a good soldier, was particularly unfit to command in such an expedition. He was surprised and routed. Two-thirds of his troops were killed or taken. With Braddock was a company of Wolfe's own regiment, the 20th. Happily he was not with it. He was reserved for greater things.

Pitt had kept his eye on young Wolfe ever since the day when he had fought so well at Dettingen. When war was declared with France (May 1, 1756) he remembered him as an officer who might do good service. The first attempt to strike was a failure. An expedition was sent against La Rochelle, but it did nothing. In this Wolfe held the post of Quartermaster-General. In the early part of the following year, he received a sudden summons to London. An army was to be sent to Cape Breton, and he was to be brigadier. The special object

which Wolfe had before him was the port of Louisburg, then an important place. For some days the troops could not land, for the fog was thick, and the sea was rough. But on June 2 (1758) the boats were ordered out. Wolfe was the first man to leap ashore. After about two months of hard work, Wolfe being



QUEBEC.

all along the most active in pushing the siege, Louisburg surrendered. He had to go home on account of ill health, but he came out again early the next year. His object was now Quebec itself, the capital of French Canada.

The first thing was to take the fleet safely up the St. Lawrence river. The navigation was difficult, and

to the English unknown. The device of hoisting flags that bore the French Lilies was practised. Canadian pilots hastened to offer their services, and found, when they were on board, that the Lilies were changed for the Cross of St. George. Doubtless they were made to understand that, though they were good subjects of the French king, they must not run the English ships aground. However this may be, the English fleet reached Quebec in safety, not a little to the surprise of the French. "They have brought forty ships of war," wrote one of the Quebec people, "where we should be afraid to take a vessel of a hundred tons." The presence of the fleet was of immense advantage to General Wolfe—he had the rank of general though he was really only a colonel. He could move hither and thither as he pleased—the enemy had no power to hinder him. Their fleet was much weaker, and what there was had been sent further up the river out of harm's way. One thing that Wolfe soon did was to set up some batteries on the bank opposite to Quebec. The St. Lawrence here is scarcely a mile broad. The English cannon soon laid a great part of the city in ruins. An attempt to destroy the batteries, made by a party of volunteers from the city, failed completely. Still, the governor of the city and the Marquis Montcalm (who was in command of the army encamped outside) had no fear

that the city might be taken. "The English," they said, "will not be mad enough to attempt it." And indeed it seemed quite impossible that the city should be taken. It stands on a narrow strip of land between the two rivers, St. Lawrence and Charles, and looks eastward down the St. Lawrence. Behind it, *i. e.* to the westward, is some high ground known as the Heights or Plains of Abraham. On the river side there are steep cliffs, which seem to be quite beyond all climbing. Yet it was in this way that Wolfe determined to approach the city. He made an attempt to take up a position lower down on the left bank of the St. Lawrence, but it failed. Then came three weeks of severe illness, and nothing was done. He was suffering from a deadly disease, but his spirit and courage were not in the least broken. "Give me a few days without pain," he said to his doctor. If he could only get to work, he felt that Quebec might be taken. And he took it.

He had noticed, between two or three miles above the city, a place where the line of cliffs was broken. From this a path led up to the Plains of Abraham. If he could land his men here, and get them up to the top without hindrance, he felt that his work was done. He had fewer soldiers, it is true, than Montcalm, but they were all of the best quality. After dark on September 12, the army embarked

on some flat-bottomed boats and dropped quietly down the river on the ebb tide. Wolfe, as they went, repeated to his companions Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* (published eight years before), saying, when he had finished it, "I would rather be the author of that piece than take Quebec." The boats glided into the cove, and the troops landed without any hindrance. They made their way up the narrow path—so narrow that two men only could walk abreast—and reached the level ground at the top in safety. There was a small body of men on guard at the top, but a volley of musketry sent them flying. Wolfe had about 3500 men, for part of his 5000 had been left to guard the landing-place, and part was sent to guard against an attack from the rear. As soon as it was sufficiently light, this force was drawn up in line facing Quebec. Montcalm, who had heard the firing, rode in the direction of the Plains, saw the red coats of the English regiments, and at once made up his mind to fight. This was the only chance of saving the city. He had rather more than double the number of men, not counting the Indians. At ten o'clock, the French line advanced, somewhat unsteadily. Wolfe would not allow his troops to return the fire until the enemy were within forty yards. Then they poured into the advancing line so heavy a volley as to break it at once. Without allowing the enemy time to re-form

their ranks, Wolfe led his men to the charge. A bullet struck him on the wrist, but he wrapped his handkerchief round it and pressed on. His uniform made him a conspicuous figure, and the Canadian riflemen, deadly shots, though not disciplined enough to stand steady under the shock of battle, made him their mark. A second bullet struck him in the groin. Even that could not stop him, but the third, hitting him in the breast, brought him to the ground. He was carried to the rear. When they asked whether a surgeon should be sent for, he said, "No, it is all over with me." For a time he seemed to become unconscious. Then there was a cry, "They run! They run!" "Who run?" cried the dying man. "The enemy, sir," replied one of those about him. "They give way everywhere!" Wolfe raised himself. Faithful to his duty to the last, he did not forget that the victory must be made as complete as possible. "Go, one of you, back to Colonel Burton," he said; "tell him to march Webb's regiment with all speed down to the river to cut off the retreat of the fugitives from the bridge." He then turned upon his side, and with the words "Now God be praised I die in peace," he passed away.

The loss of the British was 87 killed, and about seven times as many wounded. The French loss was 500 killed or mortally wounded, and twice as many

taken prisoners. The Marquis Montcalm died soon after, and on the 17th Quebec surrendered. France lost Canada at the battle of Quebec.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LOST COLONIES.

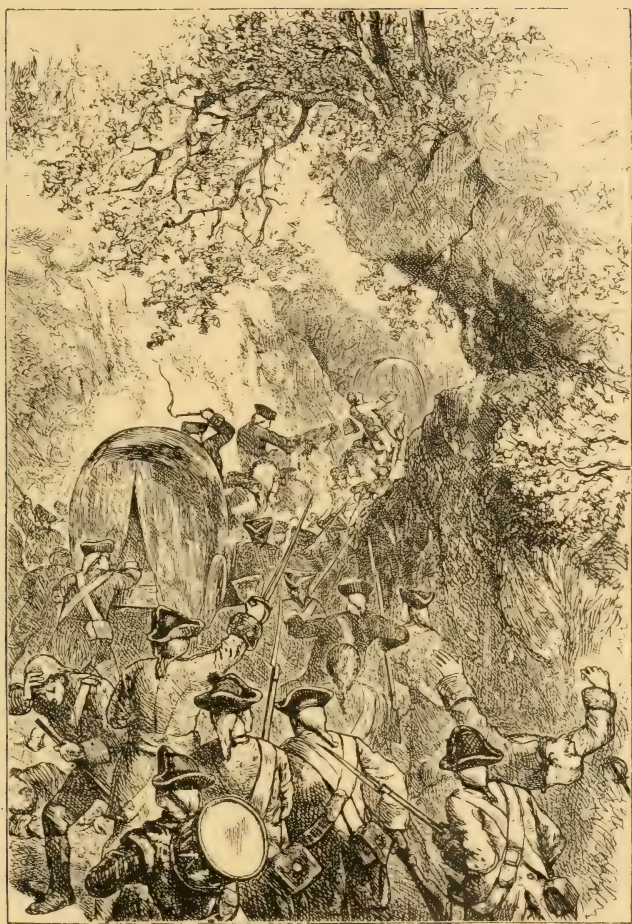
WOLFE'S victory at Quebec won, as I have said, Canada for England, but it did something to lose possessions far more valuable, the Colonies between the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi. Of these Colonies there were thirteen,¹ founded at various times from 1622 to 1733. They were different in many ways, but in one thing they were agreed, and that was the fear of France. As long as they felt this fear, they could not help looking to England to protect them; when this was removed, they began to consider whether they should not do better if they stood alone. England was ready enough to protect them against any foreign enemy; but, in return for this protection,

¹ Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Massachusetts.

it desired to make all the gain it could out of them. It compelled them to buy various articles in England, laid duties on goods sent from one colony to another, and taxed various things, such as printed books and the like, that were imported from England. Many of the taxes imposed were afterwards repealed, but a duty on tea was retained ; it was about tea that the final quarrel took place. The people of Boston in Massachusetts threw many thousand pounds' worth of it into the harbour sooner than allow duty to be paid upon it, and the English Parliament, to punish them, passed an Act by which it was forbidden to import any goods at all into Boston. This, of course, destroyed the trade of the town, and it was not long before there was war.

The first fighting took place at Lexington, a village in Massachusetts, about fifteen miles from Boston. The Colonists had collected at Concord, undoubtedly in preparation for war, a quantity of arms and ammunition. The governor of Boston sent some troops to destroy these stores. On their way they found some militiamen assembled on Lexington Green. They fired a volley and dispersed them, and going into Concord destroyed the stores. On their way back they were fired upon by a number of riflemen, who lined the hedges, and lost many in killed and wounded.

After Lexington came Bunker's Hill. This is one of two hills which are outside Boston, on the left bank of the River Charles. The other is called Breed Hill, and this it was that the Colonists occupied, though somehow the battle has got its name from the first. General Gage, who was in command of the English troops, determined to dislodge them. Everything was done in a very blundering way. The troops were landed in heavy marching order, though it was an exceedingly hot day (June 17, 1775), and with three days' provisions, which they were very unlikely to want. They were sent up to attack the hill, on which the Colonists had made a breastwork, at its very strongest point. They had to do with the bayonet what might have been done with far less loss and trouble by a cannonade from the ships. The fact was, that General Gage and the other officers in command did not believe that the enemy would offer any serious resistance. This was found to be a great mistake. Twice the soldiers were driven back. The third time, when reinforced by fresh troops, they took the breastwork, but the Colonists retreated to a neighbouring hill, which they entrenched. The British loss was 226 killed, and nearly four times as many wounded and missing; as the Colonists did not suffer half so much, Bunker's Hill was as good as a victory. Two days before the



BRADDOCK'S FORCE SURPRISED.

battle, the representatives of the Colonies had resolved to raise a regular army, and to put it under the command of George Washington. In the winter of the year the Colonists endeavoured to seize Quebec, attacking it from the same Heights of Abraham on which Wolfe had won his great victory ; but the affair was ill-managed from beginning to end, and the Colonists were repulsed with heavy loss. They kept up a siege of the city, however, till May, when, some troops having arrived from England, they retreated, leaving behind them their guns, baggage, and stores.

On July 4 in the following year (1776) the Colonists sent forth their famous Declaration of Independence, but for some time it seemed as if they had but a small chance of making good their claim to be free. The British army was transferred from Boston, where the population was altogether hostile to England, to New York, where it was mostly friendly. General Howe, who was now in command, took up a position on Slaten Island, which is below New York, and Washington sent a force of 10,000 men to Long Island, which is near to it. Howe began by attacking the Colonists, and inflicted on them a severe defeat. If he had followed up the pursuit, their whole force would probably have been destroyed. As it was, 1000 were killed, and twice as many wounded or taken prisoners. The rest Washington was able to carry off,

and he was also able to save some of the guns. A little more than a fortnight afterwards Howe entered New York. The Colonists suffered loss after loss. On November 19 Washington was glad to escape into New Jersey. He had only 3000 men with him, and these were in a deplorable condition. The year, however, was not to end without some compensation. On Christmas night Washington attacked one of the British posts on the Delaware River, and captured 900 Hessians. (The English Government, unable to find soldiers enough at home, had been driven to hire Germans from the Elector of Hesse.)

In the year 1777 things went very differently for the Colonists. General Burgoyne started from Canada with some 5000 regular troops, and a number of provincials and Indians. Almost from the first everything went wrong with him. He divided his forces, though the enemy was near with superior numbers. He did not know the country well enough to take the best route ; and he could not keep his army properly fed. The provincials and the Indians took every chance of leaving him, and at last, not quite four months after leaving Canada, he found himself compelled to surrender. He had 3500 regular troops with him. The capitulation of Saratoga was a blow from which the British never recovered.

On February 8, 1778, an alliance was made between

the States and France—many Frenchmen had already come over to fight as volunteers in the army of the Colonists—and shortly afterwards France declared war against England. Fortune, however, turned against the Colonists. Their French allies were of little use to them, and the British were better led by new generals. In December the town of Savannah, in Georgia, was taken. Things went on in much the same way in the year following. Washington, for want of men and money, had to sit still and do nothing. When the French tried in the autumn to retake Savannah, they failed disastrously. In 1780 Charleston in South Carolina was taken after a long siege.

But the war was really hopeless, and in October 1781 it practically came to an end with the capitulation of York-town, where Lord Cornwallis surrendered with an army of between six and seven thousand men. For two more years there were various negotiations both in America and in Europe. King George III. unwillingly gave his consent to the Independence of the American Colonies on December 5, 1782; but it was not for nearly a year after this (November 25, 1783) that the British troops evacuated New York. England had spent nearly two hundred millions of money to no purpose.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GATE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.

ONE of the most valuable possessions of England is the great fortress of Gibraltar. It was taken from the Spaniards with very little trouble in 1704. Many attempts have been made to get it back again, for indeed it must vex the Spanish people to see it in our hands, as much as it would vex us to see the French in possession of the Isle of Portland. The great siege of which I am going to tell the story began in 1779. In that year war broke out between England and Spain, and the Spaniards immediately blockaded Gibraltar. They sent a squadron to cut off any supplies that might come by sea, and they occupied the narrow strip of ground by which the fortress can be approached by land. Before long, food became scarce, for there were many people to be fed; the population of the place, which is now about 18,000, may then have been half as large, and there was a garrison of 5000 men. The Governor, Sir George Elliott, had been

very careful with the stores,¹ but by the end of the year little was left, and many had to live on such things as thistles and wild leeks. In January 1780 Sir George Rodney defeated the Spanish fleet, and brought a large supply of provisions. But these were in time exhausted, and the scarcity became as bad as ever. Then, in April 1781, came another supply, and the besiegers began to see that, if they were ever to take the place, they must do something more than blockade it. They began a bombardment, which did a great deal of damage to the houses in the town, but did not cause much loss to the garrison. During six weeks more than fifty thousand shot and twenty thousand shells were fired into the town, but not more than twenty soldiers in all were killed. Then the Spaniards began to approach the fortress with trenches and other siege works. The governor, who had found out from a deserter what they were doing, waited for an opportunity of attacking them. At midnight on November 26, a body of 2000 men sallied out. The besiegers were taken unawares and fled. In the course of an hour all the siege works were burnt, the guns spiked,² and the stores of powder blown up.

¹ Soldiers used to powder their hair (with flour), when going on guard. This was forbidden.

² To "spike" a gun was to make it useless by driving an iron spike into the touch-hole by which the gun could be fired off. This was done when there was not time to carry the guns off.

About half-a-year after this, the final attempt to take the place was made. The French and the Spaniards were now united. They had 33,000 men and 170 heavy guns. On the other hand, the British garrison consisted of 7000, all tried soldiers, full of spirit, and firmly resolved to stand by their brave commander. The great hope of the besiegers was in the floating batteries, which a French engineer had invented. It was hoped that they could be made so strong that no shot should make its way into them, and that it should be impossible to set them on fire. There were to be ten of these batteries, made out of the hulks of large ships. The tops were to be proof against shot and shell; the side nearest to the fort was strengthened with heavy timbers seven feet thick, and covered with raw hides. These batteries were moored with iron chains half a gun-shot from the shore. The besiegers hoped that when they had made a breach in the defences, the place could be carried by assault. They carried altogether 142 heavy cannon.

Sir George Elliott, on the other hand, did not lose courage. His second in command suggested that they might use red-hot shot against the enemy; furnaces accordingly were prepared in various parts.

On September 13 the ten batteries took up their places about six hundred yards from the shore, and opened fire. For some hours the fire went on from



THE TAKING OF GIBRALTAR.

both sides, without, as it seemed, much effect. The batteries could not break down the fortifications nor silence the British guns. The besieged, on the other hand, appeared to make no impression on the batteries. The red-hot shot either bounded off the tops or pierced the sides without doing any harm. If at any time smoke was seen, the fire was speedily put out. But in the course of the afternoon it could be seen that something was wrong with the floating batteries. They did not keep up their cannonade, and the crews had evidently as much as they could do to keep them from catching fire. Before midnight two were seen to be in flames. The British gunners, able to take good aim by the light of the fire, went on with their cannonade more furiously than ever. Six more of the batteries were burnt, and before long the other two were destroyed. These the British had captured, but in one the powder magazine blew up, and the other was found to be so injured that it had to be burnt. The besiegers lost 1600 men, and would have lost more had it not been for the courage and kindness of the British, who did their best to take the crews of the batteries that had been destroyed.

The siege, though continued in name till peace was made in February 1783, was now at an end.

CHAPTER XVII.

“THE GREATEST SAILOR SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN.”

I HAVE not space to tell the whole story of Nelson's life, and so must pass over many gallant deeds, and begin with the action which, I may say, first made him really famous. It was the 14th of February, 1797, and Nelson, who was then thirty-eight,¹ was in command of the *Captain*, a 74-gun ship in the fleet commanded by Sir John Jervis. England was then at war with both France and Spain, and Jervis was very anxious to prevent the Spanish fleet from joining the French. He met it on its way northwards—it was bound for Brest—and as it happened, gave an order which would have let it slip by, but that Nelson, who knew better what was to be done, chose not to obey it. But it is not my business now to describe the battle—it is known by the name of the Battle of Cape St. Vincent—but to say what part Nelson took in it.

¹ He was born at Burnham Thorpe, in the county of Norfolk, on Michaelmas Day, 1758.

The *Captain*, after engaging with other Spanish ships, closed with the *San Nicolas*, an 84-gun. While the action was going on, the Spaniard got entangled with another man-of-war, the *San Josef*. Nelson's ship had been a good deal knocked about; its foremast was down, and its wheel shot away; it certainly, therefore, could not sail to any purpose. Accordingly he called for the boarders, at the same time ordering the helm to be so put about that his ship should get quite close to her antagonist. Our men jumped on board, and Nelson was soon after them. While he was receiving the Spanish officers' swords, some shots were fired from the *San Josef*. Nelson called for the boarders again, himself scrambled aboard, and hastening to the quarter-deck received the captain's sword. There was but very little fighting; neither ship offered any serious resistance. But it was a very notable thing thus to take two ships, as it were at a blow. People at home could not say too much in praise of the captain of a seventy-four who took an eighty-four, and passed over its deck to take a 112-gun ship on the other side. His fellow-officers talked of "Nelson's patent bridge for boarding first-rates." "The quick perception that the ships were beaten, that the *Captain* was useless in the chase, the determination not to lie idle when anything could be done—all this was Nelson's own." And his own too was the bold

disobedience to orders, without which there might not have been any battle at all.

In the following year it became known in England that a large expedition was being fitted out in the French port of Toulon. No one knew whither it was to go. A squadron under Nelson was set to watch the harbour, but the French fleet got out during a gale of wind. Nelson's squadron was made much stronger, and he was sent to search for the enemy. He had already guessed the truth. The French were bound for Egypt, and were thinking, after they had conquered that country, of going on to India. It is a wonderful thing that he should have found out what does not seem to have been so much as thought of by the Government at home. For some time he searched for the French fleet in various parts of the Mediterranean, but could not see or hear of it. He even went to Egypt, but it had not then arrived. The search was begun on June 7, and it was not till July 28 that he learnt that the French had been seen on June 30 near the island of Candia, sailing eastward. This made him feel sure that it had gone to Egypt. Thither he sailed, and on August 1 he found the enemy, thirteen ships-of-the-line and four frigates, at anchor in Aboukir Bay. The bay is to the east of Alexandria, between that city and Rosetta. Nelson had twelve ships-of-the-line and one frigate. One of his

ships, the *Culloden*, struck on a rock before the battle began, and remained there till it was over. On the whole, the French fleet had 1198 guns and 11,110 men, against 924 guns and 7478 men on our side. But our ships were in a better condition, and the crews better disciplined.

The French fleet was anchored in line, about three miles from the shore. The English ships, none of them firing a gun till quite close to the enemy, began with the end of the enemy's line, and beat them, we may say, one by one. The battle began about 7 p.m. In about two hours' time the five ships first attacked were conquered. At 10.30 p.m. the *Orient*, 120-gun, which bore the admiral's flag, blew up. All night the fight went on. When it was over, *nine* French ships had been taken, and *four* destroyed. Four escaped. A more complete victory has never been won than the Battle of the Nile.¹

In 1801 the English Government found it necessary to declare war against Denmark. I cannot fully explain their reasons, but I may say so much. England was engaged in a desperate struggle with France; Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, while professing to favour neither side, acted in such a way as likely to help France and injure England very much. On

¹ The letters of HORATIO NELSON make the Latin sentence HONOR EST A NILO ("Honour is from the Nile").

April 2 Nelson, with nine ships (three ran aground in attempting to follow) passed up the channel on which Copenhagen is situated, and anchored opposite the floating batteries belonging to the Danes. At 10 a.m. the battle began. Three hours passed. The English ships had suffered much ; two of those that had run aground had hoisted signals of distress, and none of the Danish batteries had been silenced. The admiral in chief command—Nelson was acting under his orders—hoisted the signal, “Leave off action.” But the admiral had sent the captain of his ship to explain that Nelson might obey the order or not, as he thought best. Nelson preferred not to obey, and, as usual, was quite right. “Leave off action ?” he said, when the signal was reported to him. “Not I.” “You know, Hardy,” he went on, speaking to the captain of his ship, “that I have a right to be blind sometimes,” and putting his glass into his blind eye, said, “I really do not see this signal.” In an hour’s time it was no longer doubtful which way the battle would go. Most of the Danish ships and batteries had ceased to fire. The *Dannebrog*, the ship of the Danish commander, blew up, and every one on board except those who jumped into the water, perished. At half-past two Nelson sent a letter to the Crown Prince of Denmark in these words—“Lord Nelson has orders to spare Denmark when no longer resisting ; but

if the firing is continued on the part of Denmark, Lord Nelson will be obliged to set on fire all the floating



LORD NELSON.

batteries which he has taken, without having the power of saving the brave Danes who have defended them." In the end a truce for twenty-four hours was made ;

after this an armistice for fourteen years, and finally a peace.

Four years later England was in greater danger than ever. Napoleon was bent on invading her; if he could have got command of the sea, there would be nothing to prevent his crossing the Channel, and putting on her shores armies so large that it would have scarcely been possible to resist them. This command he never was really likely to get; the last thing that Nelson did for his country was to make it impossible. Till the very end of the war—and it lasted for nearly ten years after the battle which I am about to describe—there never was any question about England ruling the sea. France did not even attempt to dispute it.

On September 15, 1805, Nelson sailed from Portsmouth in the *Victory*. On the 28th he joined the British fleet, which was then lying off Cadiz, and took the command. The French admiral, Villeneuve, was lying in that port, and was not at all anxious to come out. But Napoleon threatened to take away his command if he did not, and on October 19–20 he came out. Nelson during this time had been busy explaining to the officers who commanded under him his plan of battle. When the time came, every man knew exactly what he had to do. Generally, we may say, the plan was the same as it had been at the battle of the Nile—to attack first one portion of the enemy's

fleet and then another with a superior force. As at the Nile, the enemy, a combination of the French and Spanish fleets, was superior in the number both of ships and guns—thirty-three ships with 2601 guns to twenty-seven with 2294. At half-past eleven a.m. on Oct. 21 he made the celebrated signal: ENGLAND EXPECTS THAT EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY. Half-an-hour later the *Royal Sovereign* came into action. For some time she was alone, with several French and Spanish ships firing at her, but with so little skill that she received very little damage. Her own fire she kept till she was quite close, and then discharged it with terrible effect. Almost exactly the same thing happened with Nelson's ship the *Victory*. At least half-a-dozen Spaniards and Frenchmen cannonaded her. They did some damage, but not a fifth part of what she did to the *Bucentaure*, the French ship into which she discharged her broadside. Nearly four hundred men were killed or wounded by it. But it was with another ship, the *Redoubtable*, that the *Victory* became finally engaged. The Frenchmen were driven from their guns by the superior fire of the English. But they had a number of men on their top-masts, and these kept up such a fire on the upper decks of the *Victory* that it was impossible to stand there. Nelson would never allow this kind of fighting to go on from the ships which he commanded. He was afraid of their

being set on fire, a thing which he had seen happen. About half-past one in the afternoon a shot from the top of the mizzen-mast struck him on the left shoulder, and passing through the epaulette, the lungs, and the spine, lodged in the muscles of the back. He fell on the deck. When Hardy, who was his flag-captain, endeavoured to raise him, he said, "They have done for me at last, Hardy." "I hope not," answered Hardy. "Yes; my backbone is shot through." He was carried below, and lingered in great pain for three hours. At times he was unconscious. But he seems to have known that a victory had been won. "Ten ships, my lord, have struck," said Hardy to him. "But none, I hope, of ours," he answered. Later on he heard the total number. "God be praised!" he murmured; "bring the fleet to an anchor." The dying Wolfe was also thinking up to the last of his duty as General. About half-past four he died, his last words having been, "Thank God! I have done my duty." Unfortunately, Admiral Collingwood, who succeeded to the command of the fleet, would not anchor. The consequence was that, as the weather became bad, some of the prizes were lost and others were recovered by their crews, who had to be set at liberty, if the ships were not to sink. Four only of the prizes were taken into Gibraltar. Four others, however, which had escaped from the battle, were

taken by another English squadron on November 4. These were all in fair condition, and one of them is still afloat, being used as a training-ship. Of the eleven that escaped into Cadiz, not one was ever used again. Practically, the French and Spanish fleets were destroyed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FROM LISBON TO THE PYRENEES.

ON April 22, 1809, Wellington¹ landed at Lisbon. The object which he set before himself was to defend Portugal from the French, and possibly to deliver Spain from them. We shall see with what wonderful skill he carried it out.

This was not the first time that England had tried to strike at Napoleon's power by attacking him in the Peninsula, of which he had gained possession in a very shameful way, and where he was greatly hated by the people. In the year before, Wellington himself had defeated the French at Vimiera, and had

¹ He was at this time Sir Arthur Wellesley. He was created Lord Wellington about three months after this time (after winning the battle of Talavera), but it will be convenient to call him by the name by which he is commonly known.

made an agreement with them by which they engaged to leave Portugal. Later, in 1808, Sir John Moore had marched into Spain, where, according to agreement, large Spanish forces were to meet him. The promise was not kept. Sir John Moore found no one; the only Spanish army that could have come to his help was defeated, and having but 27,000 men to oppose to 70,000 of the enemy, he could do nothing but retreat. This he did, closely followed by the French. At Corunna, he turned upon his pursuers and inflicted a heavy defeat upon them, dying in the moment of victory. This then was the work which Wellington now took up. Accordingly he proceeded to make sure that Lisbon should be safe from the enemy; and that his own army should have a place to which it could retreat. Lisbon stands at the sea or south end of a peninsula some thirty miles long, which has the sea on one side and the estuary of the Tagus on the other. Twenty-five miles to the north are some hills, called Torres Vedras. Here Wellington made a line of forts, and another, yet stronger, ten miles nearer Lisbon. Here was to be the refuge of his army if ever he should be compelled to fall back before superior forces.

There is no need to describe his movements during the next few months. They were very bold and skilful, and, as for a time it seemed, very successful.

By May 19, not quite four weeks from the time he landed, there was not a single French soldier in Portugal. He then marched into Spain. He relied on being helped by the Spanish troops, for he had not yet found out how little they could be trusted. They made him lose more than one chance of beating the enemy. Nevertheless, he won a great victory at Talavera (July 27–28), though he got very little help from his allies. But his experiences in Spain taught him that the work before him was one of great difficulty, and that he must be prepared for the worst.

In the next year (1810) came the time for using the shelter provided. Napoleon, who had been greatly vexed at the defeats suffered by his troops, sent a great number of troops into Spain, and with them the best of his generals—"marshals" they were called—Massena. Wellington might have got back to his shelter without fighting; but he chose to stop and give the French the chance of attacking him. He felt sure that his army would be able to hold its own, and a victory gained at this time would be worth much. It would put his own men in good spirits; it would strengthen the Government at home, and would make the Portuguese more willing to exert themselves.¹ The spot where he halted was Busaco, a place about one hundred and thirty miles north of Lisbon, for

¹ He seems afterwards to have thought that he had made a mistake in fighting.

the French were in Portugal again. It is a ridge on a line of hills, and about eight miles long. Two French columns attacked the position. The left column got up to the crest of the hill, and held it for a time. Our troops were not numerous enough to occupy the whole length of the ridge, and this particular spot was not defended. The French were soon driven down the slope. The column on the right did not do even so much, for they never quite reached the top. Wellington's army lost about 1300 in killed and wounded; the French more than three times as many.

The battle of Busaco was fought on September 27. About a fortnight later, Wellington was behind the lines of Torres Vedras. It is a curious thing that till then no one, neither the Portuguese Government nor his own army, knew for what these lines were meant. As for Massena, he had not so much as heard of them. He surveyed them, hoping to find a weak spot in them, but could not. He never ventured to attack them, though he remained in Portugal all the winter. His army fared badly during that time; but if Wellington's plan of laying all the country waste had been carried out, he would have fared much worse. As it was, he lost great numbers of men from disease and want, and when he made up his mind to retreat, had only 50,000 left out of 70,000.



A FRENCH BIVOUAC.

Massena began his retreat on March 2, and contrived it so cleverly that it was not known for some time. But on the 7th Wellington was pursuing him; and less than a month later crossed the Spanish frontier. Portugal was again free from the enemy. By this time, it should be said, he had a much stronger army, more British troops and some good Portuguese regiments. These latter had been drilled during the winter, and could be trusted to stand fire and do good service generally. On May 3-4 he fought a doubtful battle at Fuentes d'Onoro. The loss on both sides was much the same, but the English took possession of a strong fortress, Almeida, which would be useful if Portugal were to be again invaded. This was Massena's last battle; Marmont had been sent by Napoleon to take his place. A few days later (May 16) a fierce battle was fought at Albuera, not by Wellington but by Beresford, one of his lieutenants, who was scarcely as able as he was brave. It was a victory, but very dearly bought, for our loss was 7000 to 8000 on the side of the French. Out of 6000 British troops, only 1500 were left unwounded. Later in the year, Wellington tried to take two great fortresses of which the French had gained possession, Badajos and Ciudad Rodrigo, but was obliged to retire from both, the French bringing up against him superior forces. This was the end of the *third*

campaign. The winter before he had spent behind the lines of Torres Vedras, all the country that he could command being the Lisbon Peninsula. Now he was in Spain, and so secure that a pack of hounds was kept in the camp, and the country was regularly hunted.

The fourth campaign (1812) was begun very early, and with a great surprise. On January 12 Wellington took the fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo by storm, and not quite three months later (April 6) he got possession of Badajos in the same way. Both were terrible fights, Wellington losing about 1300 men in the first and more than 5000¹ in the second; but they were great blows to the enemy.

Wellington was now free to begin the second part of his task. He had driven the French out of Portugal; he was now to drive them out of Spain. It was a wonderful thing to do, but you must not forget that he was greatly helped by what Napoleon was now doing. The French Emperor had been preparing for some time to invade Russia. In June he started. If he had sent into Spain but a half of the enormous army² which he took with him on this fatal expedition, Wellington could not possibly have done what he did.

¹ Wellington burst into tears when he heard of this awful total.

² He lost 257,000 men in this campaign.

After various movements, which I have not space to describe, but in which it may be said that the very skilful French general, Marmont, had rather the advantage, the two armies met at Salamanca (July 22). Marmont made the mistake of leaving a great gap between two parts of his army. Wellington saw it in a moment and attacked, and in an hour's fighting the French line was finally broken. Marmont, who had ridden forward to do what he could to repair his blunder, was severely wounded and carried off the field. The same thing happened to his second in command. The third made a skilful retreat, which would, however, have been cut off if the Spaniards had done their proper part in the day's work. But they had left their post and the French escaped. As it was, they lost 12,000 out of 42,000 men, Wellington's being about half as much out of 46,000. It should be noted that, for the first time, the British army was superior in numbers. On August 12 Wellington entered Madrid, from which Joseph Bonaparte, to whom the Emperor had given the empty title of King of Spain, had fled a few days before. But he was not strong enough to hold the place. He had to leave it and to retreat. This he did, not without some loss, but on the whole with success. The fourth campaign of the war was now at an end. Wellington thus sums it up in a letter written to a

friend on November 30: "Although we have not been able to hold the two Castilles, our campaign has not been a bad one, and we are in a position to make a good one next year."

The campaign of 1813 began with a forward movement into Spain. It was delayed for some time while Wellington made his arrangements, for it was not till May 22 that he himself passed the Spanish frontier. On that day, when crossing the Agueda, a river which flows into the Douro, he rose in his stirrups and cried, "Farewell, Portugal!" And indeed he never saw the country again, for when the campaign was over, he sailed directly for England.

And now the French were retreating, taking with them all that they could carry of the vast plunder which they gathered together in Spain. King Joseph was nominally in command, with Marshal Jourdan to help him. The two could not agree; the troops, too, were disappointed; they were in retreat, and retreat never suits the French soldier, who is very apt to lose heart, and, unlike the Englishman, knows only too soon when he is beaten. At Vittoria, a valley near the mountains of Biscay, Joseph found himself compelled to make a stand.

Through this valley of Vittoria there runs a river named the Zamorra, and by the river the high-road

to Bayonne, along which the French were marching, with a vast train of baggage. At either end there are hills. It was at these two ends, as well as in the middle, where there are several bridges over the river, that Wellington made his attack. General Graham was on the left or west, General Hill on the right, Wellington in the centre. There was much fierce fighting everywhere, but especially on the left. If the French could have been beaten here, their whole army would have been destroyed. But their commander here held his own bravely, and though the road to Bayonne was seized by the English, another, namely to Pampeluna, was left open. By this the French army was able to retreat. The losses in killed and wounded were much the same on either side—between five and six thousand; but the French lost everything but their lives and arms, one hundred and fifty out of one hundred and fifty-two guns, all their stores of ammunition and food, all their baggage, in fact everything that belonged to themselves or that they were carrying away out of Spain.

The battle of Vittoria was fought on June 21. For more than a year afterwards the war went on, first in Spain before San Sebastian, which was besieged on July 10 and taken by storm three weeks later, and among the valleys and heights of the Pyrenees; and afterwards in France itself, which Wellington entered

on October 7. The last battle was fought at Toulouse on April 10, 1814, and fought to no purpose, because Napoleon had abdicated six days before.

CHAPTER XIX.

WATERLOO.

I SAID in the last chapter that Napoleon abdicated, *i. e.* gave up the throne of France on April 6, 1814. He was allowed to remain an Emperor, but of a very small empire, namely, the little island of Elba, between Italy and Corsica. This, as you may suppose, did not satisfy him long. He left Elba on February 26, 1815, and returned to France. Here most of his old soldiers joined him again, and for a short time—the Hundred Days, as it is called¹—he was again Emperor of France.

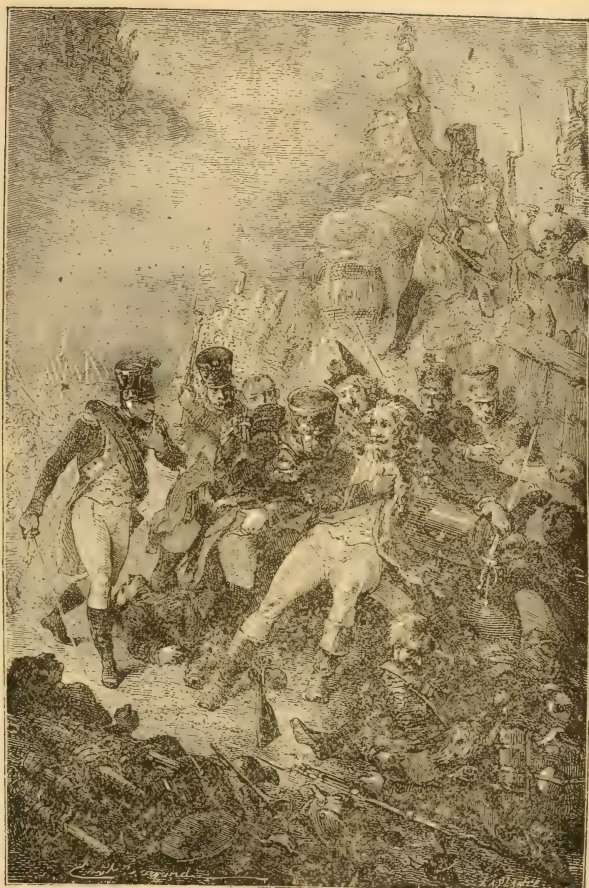
The kings or their ambassadors had been quarrelling at Vienna, where they had met to arrange the affairs of Europe ; but the news of Napoleon's return made them agree. All promised to help in resisting

¹ The "Hundred Days" are reckoned from March 20, 1815, the day on which he entered Paris after his return from Elba, to June 29, the day on which he left that city never to return.

him, and it was settled that in six weeks 700,000 men should be ready to fight. As a matter of fact, nothing of the kind was done. England, indeed, sent an army over into Belgium, but it was not a large one, for there were only 30,000 British troops in it, and some of these were new recruits. Wellington was, of course, put in command, but the veteran soldiers whom he had led to victory in Portugal and Spain were, for the most part, in America, whither they had been sent for the war with the United States. The total number that he had was rather above 100,000, and this was made up by Germans, who, for the most part, were good troops; Dutch, who were not so good, but still fair; and Belgians, many of whom were very bad. The Prussians had an army of about 80,000 in the field, under Marshal Blucher, their most famous general. Napoleon, on the other hand, had an army of 130,000, composed, for the most part, of excellent soldiers, the veterans whom he had commanded in so many wars. He hurried from Paris, which he left on June 12, to the French frontier. His plan was to attack first the Prussians and then the English with his whole force. Wellington was at Brussels, Blucher at Namur, that is about fifty miles apart. On June 16 Napoleon attacked the Prussians' left at Fleurus and defeated them, but not so heavily as to make them unable to

move. On the same day one of his marshals, Ney, fell on the British troops at Quatre Bras. He did not begin his attack till late in the day ; had he been earlier, he might have done more, for he would certainly have found his adversaries weaker. As it was, though some Belgian troops fled from the field, and the Duke of Brunswick's legion was broken for a time, their leader being killed, Ney could not drive the British from their position. The total loss of the Allies was about 25,000 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners ; that of the French about 16,000. Napoleon had won a victory, but not so great a one as he wanted. He had beaten, but not routed, the Prussians, and he had not beaten the British at all.

On the 17th there was no fighting ; it was on the 18th that the great battle was fought which was to put an end to Napoleon's power. Wellington's line of battle was along a ridge about two miles long. Behind it was the Forest of Soignies, into which he could retreat if it became necessary. In front of him on the right was a country house called Hougoumont, and about the centre a farm named La Haye Sainte. The ridge gave some shelter to his troops from the French cannon. He had about 62,000 men, with 156 guns ; Napoleon had 65,000 with 246 guns ; but some of Wellington's troops were, as has been said, worth but very little. It was not so much that they



FRENCH TROOPS IN ACTION.

wanted courage, but they were better disposed to the French than to us.

Napoleon did not begin the attack until about half-an-hour before noon. There had been rain in the night, and it would be convenient that the ground should dry before he moved. Still, as it turned out, this was a mistake. Napoleon did not know that the Prussians were as near the English army as they really were ; if he had, he would certainly have done his best to beat the British troops before they could possibly come up. The first thing done was to attack Hougomont. Here fierce fighting went on during the whole day, but the French never got possession of the whole place. The house was always held by the British garrison. But at the centre things were somewhat better for the French. They took the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte, and routed the Dutch-Belgian brigade. Yet here, too, they suffered a considerable loss ; thrown into disorder by the heavy fire from the English lines, they were charged by the Union Brigade of cavalry on one side, and by the Household Brigade or Lifeguards on the other. Napoleon, who had found out from a Prussian officer who had been taken prisoner that Blucher was advancing, made more and more furious efforts to break the English line. A huge body of cavalry, as many as 12,000 in number, charged time after time, but

could not break the squares of British infantry. "I shall beat them yet," Wellington said about this time to one of his officers. Still, the battle was far from being won. The fierce cannonade had so thinned a part of the line where the Hanoverians were posted that the Duke himself had to rally the wavering troops.

It was now late. Napoleon had been vainly trying for eight hours to overcome the stubborn British lines, and now the Prussians had appeared on the field. He made one last effort, sending the last ten battalions of the Old Guard. It was in vain. They charged in two columns, but both were broken and driven back. Then Wellington ordered an advance of the whole British line. The French army broke up in hopeless confusion and fled. Napoleon's Empire had fallen. It was a splendid victory, but dearly bought. The British loss in killed and wounded was 15,000, the Prussians nearly half as much. This last fact shows that the Prussian army had a much greater share in the battle than most people think.

CHAPTER XX.

NAVARINO.

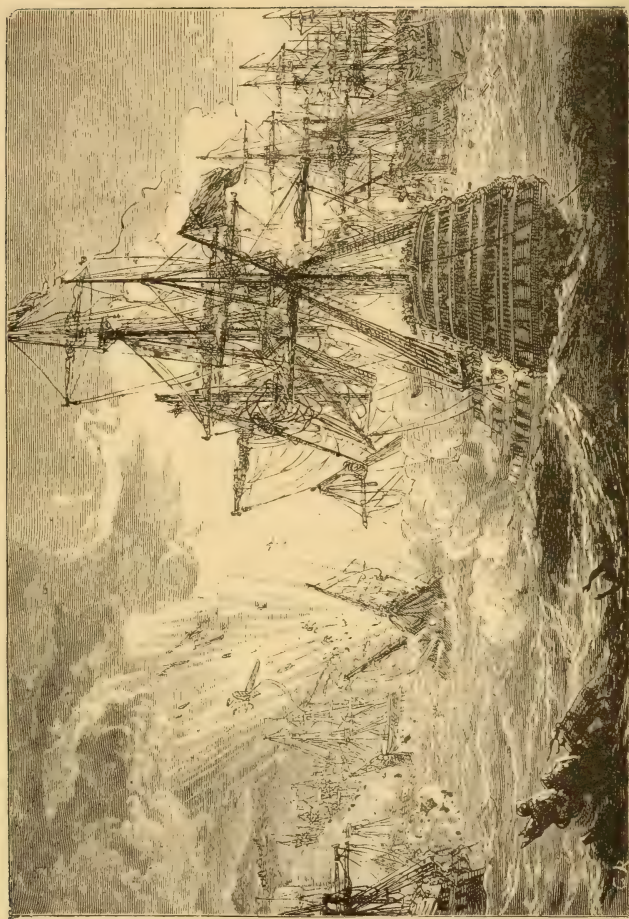
ON the first day of January, 1822, the Greeks declared themselves independent. For some time past they had been discontented with Turkish rule. They had rebelled more than once, and at this time had driven the Turks out of the Morea.¹ Great sympathy was felt for them throughout Europe, especially by those who had read the history and knew the books of ancient Greece.

Fighting went on for some years. The Greeks won some victories, but they were not a match for their enemies. In May 1827, Athens, which had been captured by the patriots five years before, was compelled to surrender to the Turks. Then England,

¹ The *Morea*, so called from its resemblance to a mulberry leaf, is what was called in ancient times the Peloponnesus (Island of Pelops), being surrounded by the sea everywhere except where it is joined to mainland Greece by the narrow Isthmus of Corinth. Greece was conquered by the Turks in 1460 (seven years after the capture of Constantinople). Towards the end of the next century it came into the hands of Venice, and the Turks recovered it in 1714.

France, and Russia joined together to bring about peace, more readily because the Turks carried on the war in the most savage fashion. But the Turks refused to come to terms, and made a great effort thoroughly to subdue the rebels, as they called the Greeks. For this purpose they collected a fleet of seventy men-of-war of various sizes¹ at Navarino, a harbour on the western side of the Morea. This fleet was under the command of Ibrahim Pasha, eldest son of Mehemet Ali, Viceroy of Egypt. Early in September the Russian squadron joined the fleets of England and France, and the three admirals sent a message to Ibrahim to this effect—"We are instructed from home to prevent any further fighting between the Turks and the Greeks, and we desire you to do your best to carry this out." Ibrahim appeared to consent, and an armistice, that is, a stay of fighting, was concluded till an answer should come from the Sultan at Constantinople. But Ibrahim did not mean to keep his word. No answer was expected for twenty days, but at the end of a week the Egyptian squadron stole out of the harbour of Navarino, intending to carry on the war elsewhere. The English admiral sailed after it, and, though he had only three ships with him,

¹ There were three line-of-battle ships, five 54-gun ships, fifteen frigates, twenty-five corvettes, and twelve brigs, with twelve smaller vessels.



THE BATTLE OF NAVARINO.

compelled it to come back. No satisfactory answer was received from the Sultan, and the three admirals made up their minds to blockade the Turkish fleet in the harbour of Navarino. No one supposed that Ibrahim would venture to resist.

In the afternoon of October 20 the combined fleets sailed into the harbour. The Turks, on seeing them, began to prepare for battle, though they were not by any means all of one mind. The Egyptian admiral, for instance, who may have remembered, or possibly seen, the battle of the Nile, declared that he would not fight. Their fleet was arranged in the shape of a crescent; so large was it that the horns of this crescent nearly surrounded the ships of the three Allies. These latter had strict orders not to fire a gun, unless the Turkish ships should first fire on them. But if this were to happen, then they were to set to work in real earnest, for the admirals' orders ended with a famous message once sent by Nelson to the captains of his fleet—"No captain can do wrong who lays his ship alongside one of the enemy."

The Turks began the fighting, for they fired upon a boat which had been sent with a message to a Turkish fire-ship, which the Allies thought to be dangerously near. An English and a French ship returned the fire, and then sent parties of their crews to board the fire-ship. They were just about to do this when it was

blown up. Next an Egyptian frigate poured a broadside upon the *Dartmouth*, one of the British ships. The men in the rigging hurried down to the deck, and the captain called to them, "Now, my men, down to the main-deck, and fire away as fast as you can."

The English admiral, still anxious to avoid, if possible, a general battle, sent his pilot to the Turkish commander for an explanation. But the enemy fired upon the boat and killed the messenger. On this the admiral poured one broadside on a Turkish and the other on an Egyptian ship. Both were reduced to mere wrecks ; but as they swung aside they made way for a second line of the enemies' ships. These all opened fire, and in a few minutes more the battle became general, and the whole harbour was covered with ships fiercely engaged. And while some of the enemies' ships were still fighting others were burning, while, from time to time, first one and then another blew up with a terrible explosion. As soon as an enemy's ship became disabled its crew set fire to it.

For nearly four hours the battle went on, for, as I have said, it was past two o'clock when it began, and the sun had set before it was finished. Of all the seventy Turkish ships only one frigate and seventeen smaller vessels remained fit to put to sea. All the others had been knocked to pieces, sunk, or burnt. The loss of the Turks was terribly great, for the ships

were crowded with men, and the fire of the Allies was so well directed that it made dreadful havoc among them. It was reckoned afterwards that between five and six thousand Turks and Egyptians perished at Navarino.

Strange stories are told of the carelessness of the Turks about their own men. When the battle was over, the English admiral sent to the Turkish commander offering him any help that he might want. There had been terrible slaughter among his men. Hundreds of corpses had been thrown overboard, and the deck was strewed with wounded. Some Turkish officers were smoking and drinking coffee. "We don't want any help," said one of them to our admiral's messenger. "But," said the Englishman, "shall not our surgeon attend to your wounded?"

"No," replied the Turk, "wounded men want no help; they soon die."

The English loss was about 140 in killed and wounded, that of the French a little more.

CHAPTER XXI.

"THE WHITE NORTH."

FOR the last three hundred years many British sailors, and not a few belonging to other nations, have been making voyages into the region of perpetual ice and snow. For a long time, far, we may say, into this century, these voyages were made in the hope of gain—not to be got at once, indeed, but to come some day. It was believed that there was a short way to the East, which would make trade with India and China more profitable. Now—and there is still as much zeal about Arctic voyaging as ever—it is knowledge that men have in view.

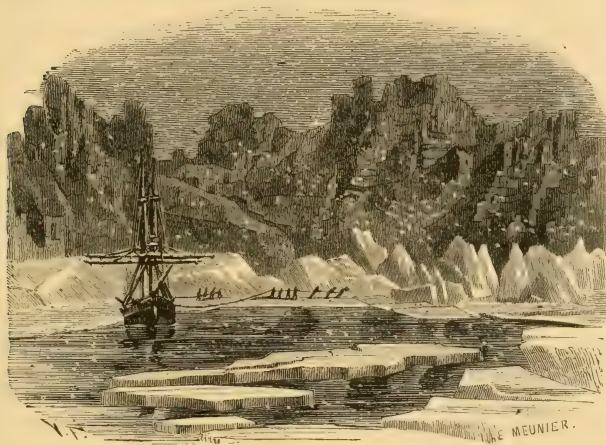
Sebastian Cabot was the first to have the idea of a "North-west Passage," as it was called. This was about 1497. Half-a-century afterwards, Sir Hugh Willoughby sailed to find it, but he and his crew perished of hunger. Then a "North-eastern" passage was looked for. Frobisher, Davis, Barentz are the names of some of the brave seamen who went on this errand. But no one had more success than

Henry Hudson, who made his way in a vessel in which one would hardly like now to cross to America, with a crew of ten men and a boy, as far north as latitude $80^{\circ} 30'$. This was in 1607. He made three more voyages. In the fourth his crew mutinied and put him out in an open boat to die of cold and hunger. Hudson's Bay, which he discovered, bears his name. In 1743 the English Government offered a large reward to any one who should discover a north-west passage, and some years afterwards another reward to any one who should get to within one degree of the North Pole. This second reward has never been earned, for no one has been nearer to the Pole (as I write the distance has been lessened by 160 miles) than 400 miles, nearly six degrees; but the first was paid to Captain McClure, who discovered the passage in October 1856. By that time, however, all idea that it might be found useful for trade had been given up. But I cannot tell the story of Arctic navigation; all that I can do is to give some account of the adventures of one man, John Franklin. I choose him, not because he was the most skilful and experienced of the many brave seamen who have explored these dreary and dangerous regions, but because he is certainly the most famous.

Franklin, born at Spilsby in Lincolnshire in 1786, was present as a midshipman at the battles of Copen-

hagen and Trafalgar. Most of the time between these two he spent in a voyage of discovery in the Southern hemisphere. His first voyage to the Arctic regions was made in 1818. In the year following he was sent again, this time in command of a land expedition. He and his party went by sea to Fort York, on the east side of Hudson's Bay. There they took what was called a "York boat," a flat-bottomed boat about forty feet long, which drew only twelve inches of water. In this they could navigate even very shallow rivers. Their plan was to go from river to river, and lake to lake, dragging their boat over land when it was necessary. After a great deal of labour and suffering, the party reached the Great Slave Lake, which is about 800 miles north-west of Fort York. Here they were to pass the winter, and to build a house which they called Fort Enterprise. But on examining their store of provisions they found that they had not enough to last. One of the officers, Lieut. Back, started for Fort Chipewyan, which is on Athabasca Lake, to have some more sent on. He travelled more than a thousand miles (there and back) on snow-shoes, sometimes having no food for two or three days together. The party left their winter quarters in the beginning of June, in the next year, and on the 15th of that month reached the shore of the Arctic Sea. The journey back was a terrible one.

For days together the travellers lived on a plant, called *tripe de roche*, with now and then some singed hide or bit of old leather. They thought themselves lucky if they found the bones and putrid flesh of a dead deer. On October 4, Lieut. Back went on ahead to Fort Enterprise to fetch provisions, and a



VESSEL TOWED THROUGH THE ICE.

few days afterwards Franklin and some of his party followed him, leaving the rest, who were too weak to move, under the care of Mr. Richardson, the doctor, and another officer. When Franklin reached the fort he found nothing. The Indians had promised to make a store of provisions, but had not done it.

Back had left a note saying that he was going on to Fort Providence, and would send food from there. Franklin and his companions were too weak to move more than a few yards at a time. On October 24 he, with two others, started to look for the Indians, but his snow-shoes broke, and he was compelled to come back. While he was away some reindeer came close to the house, but the men were too weak to shoot them. On the 29th Richardson, the doctor, arrived with a seaman: these two were the only survivors of the party of eight left at the first halting-place. Hood had been murdered by a Canadian boatman, Michel by name, and Richardson had shot Michel in self-defence. The man had been suspected of murdering and devouring two others of his companions. Only six of the company were now left alive, and of these two soon died. On November 7, three Indians, who had been sent by Back with food, arrived. The Indians took the kindest care of the sick men. In the end, after spending another winter in the country, they reached York Factory on July 14, and four months later got back to England. Franklin had been away from England for more than two years. In 1825 he went again to the same region, and by the same way. This time everything was well managed; proper preparations for food, etc., were made, and the expedition was prosperous.

Many hundred miles of the north coast of America were surveyed, and the party returned safely to England.

In 1843 Franklin, now Sir John, went again in command of an expedition, which this time was to go by sea. He had now two ships, the *Erebus* and the *Terror*, which had lately come back from a voyage to the regions of the South Pole. The ships were made as fit for the work as possible, and were supplied with provisions for two years. The crew consisted of twenty-three officers, and a hundred and eleven men. No man had had more experience of Arctic voyaging than Franklin, but he was too old for the work. The expedition set sail on May 19, and was last seen by the captain of a whaling ship in Melville Bay, which is on the west coast of Greenland. But though both the ships and the crews were absolutely lost, something has been learnt about their fate by those who went out in search of them. It seems that at first things went well with them. But in the second year their ships were caught in a pack of ice from which they never got free. In this ice their second winter was spent. And now the great discovery was made. Though the ships could not be moved, two of the officers made an expedition to King William Island, and saw then that if they could only get their ships so far—and

there was nothing but ice to hinder it—they would have made the North-west Passage. Franklin himself died on June 11, 1847. If the survivors had made up their minds at once that the ships must be left, and had made their way by land to some factory in Northern Canada, they might have saved their lives. But they were unwilling to give up the hope of success, especially as they knew that it was within their reach, if only they could get clear of the ice. And of this they had hopes for a time. The whole pack began to move southward, but when it was sixty miles from the American shore it became fixed again. So it came to pass that the crew had to spend the third winter in the ice. When this was finished their provisions had come to an end, for they had started with food for three years only. In the spring of 1843 the survivors, one hundred and five in number, started on sledges for the Great Fish River. They seemed not to have actually reached it, though we know that they were not far off. Some Eskimos—this is the name given to the Indians who inhabit these regions—declared that they had seen white men travelling in this direction. Many expeditions were sent out from England in search for them. In 1854, Dr. Rae got from the Eskimos some forks and spoons that had belonged to the two ships. And in 1859, Captain M'Clintock, in the steam yacht

Fox, which had been fitted out by Lady Franklin, found papers which one of the two officers mentioned before had left at Point Victory, with some words added by Captain Crozier, who was in command of the *Terror*, in 1848. It was on this paper that the date of Sir John Franklin's death was given. Captain M'Clintock collected a number of relics belonging to the expedition. Of the *Erebus* and *Terror* nothing was ever discovered.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE KHYBER PASS.

I AM going to tell the story of the greatest disaster that ever happened to a British army.

In 1838-39 the Indian Government sent an army into Afghanistan. Its object was to restore a certain prince, Shah Soojah by name, who had been driven into exile nearly twenty years before. It hoped that he would be grateful for what had been done for him, and that the country which he ruled would be a valuable ally. Unfortunately, Shah Soojah was a feeble creature, and his people hated him because he had been put over them by foreigners.

For some time, however, everything was quiet, though there were some who suspected danger. But in 1841 some of the Afghan chiefs rebelled. They had been provoked by having the payment which had been made to keep them quiet reduced. What they did was to occupy the passes between Afghanistan and India. The most important of these was the Khyber Pass, of which I shall have more to say hereafter. A brigade which was returning to India was attacked on its way, and suffered no small loss, though it managed at last to get clear. The officer in command, General Sale, thought it best not to go further than the town of Jellalabad. This place, of which we shall hear again, he occupied and fortified.

Meanwhile a riot had broken out at Cabul, the capital of Afghanistan, and the envoy of the Indian Government was murdered. Very soon the whole city was in a state of revolt. The English force, which was considerable—four regiments of infantry and two of cavalry, with some other troops—was badly managed. Forts which might have been defended were given up, and other opportunities of attacking or resisting the enemy were lost. Elsewhere, also, great losses were suffered. One native regiment mutinied and murdered its officers; another was destroyed by the Afghans.

Then the civil officer, Macnaughten by name, to

whom the generals had to look for orders, resolved to negotiate with the enemy. The Afghan chiefs made delay after delay, but at last, on December 11, they agreed to a treaty. Twelve days afterwards, when Macnaughten rode out from Cabul to have a conference with the chiefs, he was seized and murdered.

Still, even after this, the English officers went on negotiating. They thought that they could neither remain in Cabul nor force their way back to India, and that therefore nothing could be done but accept the terms which the enemy offered them. Briefly, these were that they were to evacuate the country, and, in consideration of this, were to be allowed to return unhurt, with their arms and property. On January 6, 1842, a bitterly cold day, with the snow lying deep on their road, all that was left of the British army, with the women and children that belonged to them, left the city. There were 4500 men in all, of whom 690 were Europeans, an army quite strong enough to hold its own even then, if it had been well commanded.

All the day was occupied in moving out, and from the first the enemy broke in the cruellest way the promises made by their chiefs that the British should be allowed to retreat in safety. The first day only six miles of march were accomplished. The army and its followers bivouacked in the snow, without fire, shelter,

or food. Many soldiers and camp-followers, accustomed to the warmth of an Indian climate, perished of cold. During the night a part of the native troops deserted.

The next day, the march—if march it can be called—was resumed. The enemy still continued to plunder and kill. The soldiers had lost all heart, and made no resistance. They even allowed five out of their seven guns to fall into the hands of the Afghans. Another night even more miserable than the first followed. When the morning came, only a few hundred men were able to bear arms. In the course of the next day the women and children with the married officers were given over to the Afghan chiefs.

On the 10th the advance, consisting of what was left of the 44th Regiment (Europeans) and a few native cavalry, with one gun, had found their way through a narrow pass, in some places not more than ten feet wide, which lay in their way, and waited to be joined by the main body. But the main body had perished. Only a few stragglers survived to tell the story to those who, for the time, but only for the time, had escaped.

The Afghan commander now offered to take the remnant that was left safely to Jellalabad, if they would lay down their arms. The offer was rejected, and Brigadier Shelton, who was in command, pro-



AN AFGHAN PASS. SOLDIERS HAULING A GUN.

posed that they should make a night march to a place called Jugdulluk, which was about forty miles short of Jellalabad. The march was made, though not till after long delay, for the force had still a crowd of camp-followers with it, and could not move quickly. Jugdulluk was reached on the afternoon of the 11th, but no shelter was to be found here, and those still surviving had to march on again. The Afghans had put up across the road a barrier of prickly brushwood. This kept back the front rank from advancing; the rear was continually attacked by the savage enemy. The British soldiers made a brave defence. One officer, a captain in the 44th regiment, slew five Afghans before he fell. At last the brushwood barrier was broken down, and the few survivors—twenty officers and forty-five European soldiers—reached Gundamuk, a place half-way between Jugdulluk and Jellalabad. They took up their position on a little hillock.¹ At first the Afghans charged them, trying to wrest their arms from them, but were beaten back. The enemy then retired to a distance, and fired, picking off man after man. When they had weakened it, as they thought, enough, they charged again—they greatly wished, you see, to have some prisoners—and at last overpowered the little band. One officer, who had wrapped the colours of

¹ We are reminded of the Spartans at Thermopylæ.

the 44th round his waist, was carried off, and with him a few private soldiers who had been wounded.

Meanwhile the mounted officers had ridden forward. Of these five were killed on the way, two of them within four miles of Jellalabad. One survivor only, a doctor, Brydon by name, reached that town.

I must now relate what happened at Jellalabad. When Sale reached this town its fortifications were not capable of being defended. He had thirteen days to strengthen them, and his engineers made such good use of the time that when on November 29 the Afghans attacked it, they were driven off with heavy loss. About a month later came the news of what had happened at Cabul, and soon afterwards came a command from the General-in-Chief ordering Sale to give the place up, according to the terms of the agreement that had been made. Sale declared that he should not heed an agreement that had been made under fear of death, and that he should hold the place till the Government itself should order him to retire. Two or three days later came Dr. Brydon with the dreadful news that he was the sole survivor of the army that had marched a week before out of Cabul.

Sale himself was now shaken. A council of war was held, at which he declared that they could not hope to be relieved for a long time to come, and that his own opinion was to make terms. The Afghans

offered a safe retreat to India, and he advised the council to accept the offer. Broadfoot, the engineer officer who had strengthened the defences, declared that such conduct would be neither safe nor honourable. They could hold Jellalabad, he said, as long as they wanted to. Another officer, Oldfield by name—I feel bound to mention these gallant men—exclaimed, “I will fight to the last drop of my blood, but I will never be a hostage, and I wonder that any one should regard an Afghan’s word as worth anything.” But the majority was the other way. Only these two voted for holding the town. But their example had its effect. The others soon recovered their courage, and it was resolved by all that they would hold on.

For nearly three months the siege went on. Then as the town was closely blockaded, supplies began to fall short, and Sale determined on making a sally. The Afghan general had about 5000 men, and the garrison marched out in three columns, one of them led by an officer who was to become famous afterwards, Henry Havelock, to attack him. In the end the Afghans were swept out of their position, lost all their guns, and had their camp set on fire. Jellalabad was now safe. A fortnight afterwards General Pollock arrived with a relieving force, which was played into its camp on the plain by the band of the 13th

Regiment playing the tune of "Oh ! but ye've been lang o' coming !"

Five months afterwards the British army again entered Cabul. The great Bazaar, in which the heads of Burnes and Macnaughten had been paraded, was burnt, and the two places at which British regiments had been slaughtered were also destroyed. This done, the army returned to India.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LION AND THE BEAR.

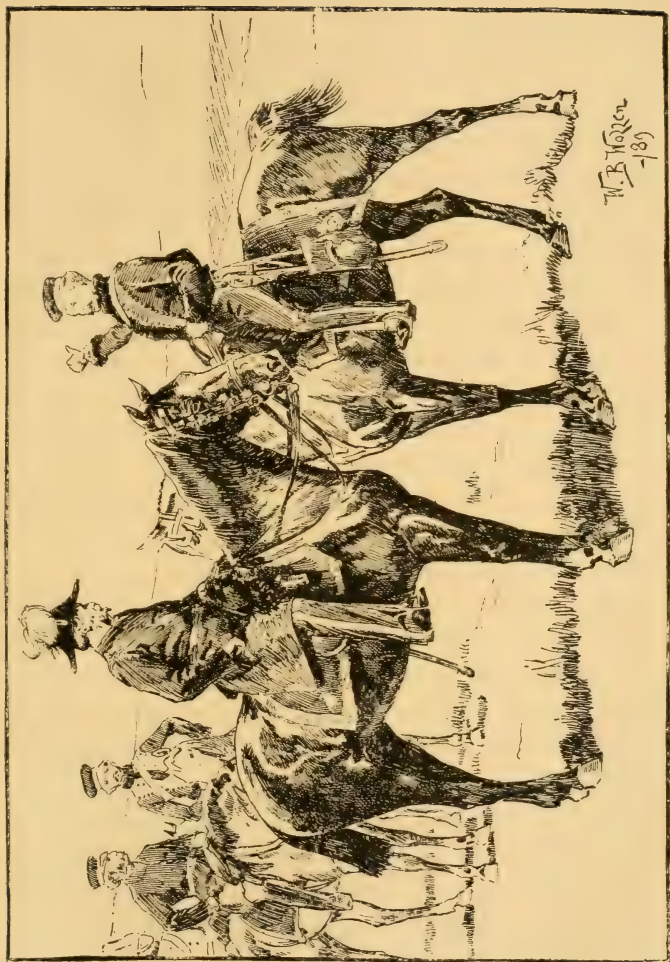
IN the year 1854 war broke out between England and France, on the one side, and Russia on the other. The cause, to put it shortly, was the ambition of Russia, which desired to seize part at least of the dominions of the Sultan of Turkey, especially Constantinople. I pass over the first few months. War was declared on March 28, but nothing of any importance was done for nearly half-a-year. Then England and France resolved to invade the Crimea. There Russia had a great fortress and arsenal, with a harbour which could hold a great fleet. As long as Sebastopol stood, Constantinople never could be

safe. The great object of the Allies, as I shall hereafter call the two Powers, was to take this place. On September 14 the landing of troops was begun ; five days later the Allies marched in the direction of Sebastopol, which was about 25 miles distant. The Russian commander had taken up a position on some heights on the further side of the river Alma. It was a strong position, and he might have made it much stronger. Near the sea the heights were very steep, and could be climbed only by a track in one place and a rough road in another. These approaches might have been destroyed, but these were not even guarded. The French, who made the attack on this side, suffered but little loss. And if our men had waited till they (the French) had finished their work, they too would have had an easier task. But the French commander asked Lord Raglan, who was the English general, to attack at once, and this was done. Our troops had to bear a heavy cannonade and musketry fire before they could come to close quarters with the enemy. There were mistakes in the way in which they were led, for indeed few officers had any experience, save some of the older men, who had served in the Peninsula forty years before. The Light Division had the hardest of the fighting to do, but it did it well. The first to make their way into the Russian breastwork were the men of the 23rd

(Welsh Fusiliers). When, afterwards, they were forced partly down the slope by the superior force of the Russians, the Guards helped them bravely. Then the Russians gave way and fled in confusion towards Sebastopol, the English artillery doing them much harm as they went. We lost 2000 men killed and wounded, the Russians at least three times as many; the French suffered but little.

It has been said by some writers that the Allies might have taken Sebastopol if they had gone on at once. Other writers have doubted; and indeed we can never be certain as to what might or might not have been. And it must be remembered that, though the Allies lost many men during the siege that followed, the Russians lost many more. They had to march all the men that were wanted to defend Sebastopol over great distances. Those that perished on the way were more than those who were killed in the siege.

The Allies now set about besieging the town, the English taking the east side, the French the south, and soon found out that they had a very hard task to perform. While they were busy making trenches and cannonading, the Russians had quartered a large army on the field, and with this on October 25, they attacked the English lines at Balaklava. They drove out the Turks from some redoubts and then advanced



CAPTAIN NOLAN GIVING THE ORDER FOR THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

against the one English regiment which, with the Turks, made up the garrison of the place. This regiment was the 93rd Highlanders, commanded by Sir Colin Campbell, afterwards Lord Clyde. The Highlanders stood firm, not in square, as usual when cavalry charge infantry, but in the "thin red line" which has become so famous. By this time, the English Heavy Cavalry were coming up to support the Highlanders. On their way, they came across a large body of Russian cavalry, charged them, and drove them down the other slope of the hill, on which they stood in confusion. The Light Brigade of cavalry was at hand, and might have charged the flying enemy and completed their destruction. They did not do so, but unhappily they did something else which made the day, that had been so far a day of success, end in disaster. Lord Raglan sent an order to the officer in command of the brigade to charge and so prevent the Russians carrying away the guns from the redoubts which they had taken. The charge was made, though it is doubtful whether it was what had been ordered, and quite certain that if Lord Raglan had seen what was to be done, he would not have thought of it. In front, about half-a-mile off, were the batteries which the brigade was to charge; on either side there were cannon and masses of infantry. The two English regiments, six hundred men in all,

rode straight on, through a storm of shot and shell; they actually reached the batteries and drove the gunners away. Then they rode back, but they had lost nearly half their men and more than four-fifths of their horses. One of the regiments, when it was next mustered, had but ten mounted troopers. "It's splendid, but it is not war," said a French general who saw the charge. He was quite right; but the same might have been said of Arnold von Winkelreid when he broke the line of the Austrian infantry by gathering the spears into his own breast.

A week afterwards, the Russians made another and more dangerous attack upon the Allies. The Russian commander had now 100,000 men at his disposal, and if he had used them with more skill, he might well have put an end to the siege. Before dawn on November 5, 19,000 men came out of Sebastopol and advanced against the English position, on what was called Mount Inkerman. Later in the day, another Russian force, not less numerous, came up from the other side. How the English troops resisted, and in the end drove back these assailants, far more numerous than themselves, it is impossible to say. The battle has been called a soldiers' battle. This means that the British troops fought where they stood, often in quite small parties; their courage, their strength, their national habit of not knowing

when they were beaten, all helped them. "They held their ground with an audacious obstinacy, which it would be difficult to parallel in European warfare." Towards the afternoon, when their strength was becoming exhausted, the French came to their help. Without this, they could hardly have stood as firm as they did. Their loss was very heavy, 2300 men killed and wounded, about a third of their whole force. But the Russian loss was many times greater, more than 12,000 men ; that of the French was about 900. If the Russians had used all the troops that were available, if, for instance, the French lines had been attacked at the same time with the English, the day of Inkerman would hardly have ended as it did, in one of the greatest victories in our history.

After this defeat, the Russians did not again attempt to attack the Allies in the field, but the siege was very far from an end. The English troops—not to speak of the French who, for a time at least, suffered less—went through a terrible winter from cold, hunger, and disease. One cause of this was a great storm which happened nine days after the battle of Inkerman. The tents in the camp were blown down ; many ships, even in harbour, were wrecked ; the rain and snow, which continued for many days, made the roads and all the country deep in mud. Another cause was the want of proper stores for the men ; some necessary

things, especially fuel, were wanting ; others had been badly chosen by the board of officers which had to look after this business.¹ But the chief reason of all the trouble was the want of a Transport Service as it is called ; that is, a regular establishment of wagons, horses, and drivers to carry the food and other necessary things from the stores, which were by the sea, up to the camp. The few horses that there were died for want of forage, and the stores had to be carried by the soldiers themselves. The soldiers, after being for many hours in the trenches,² instead of finding their food ready for them, had to go for miles through mud and rain to fetch it, and often found that it could not be got. And it must not be forgotten that, for some parts of the siege, the English army had more than its fair share of the work to do. The result of all this was such a state of misery as it is quite impossible to describe. At one time (the beginning of January, when things were, perhaps, at

¹ Green, or unroasted coffee, for instance, was given out to the men. Commonly, it is better to give it out green, because when it has been roasted for some time it begins to lose its flavour. But when the men were situated as they were before Sebastopol, green coffee was of no use, for it could not be roasted.

² The "trenches" are the zigzag lines by which a besieged city is approached. Zigzag they must be, because, if they were straight, they could be swept by cannon fired from the walls.

their worst) there were more than twice as many sick as were fit for duty. When I say "fit for duty," I mean who said they were fit for duty, for the brave soldiers held out to the very last of their strength before they would own that they were sick. One regiment was so reduced that there were but eight men (not counting officers) on parade. If the Russians had only known how weak we were, they might have put an end to the siege.

Many strange stories are told of this time, some of them sad, some amusing. One thing that very soon came to pass was that the soldiers took very little trouble to keep themselves smart, but put on whatever they could find that would keep them comfortable and warm.¹ An English major who was dressed in this sort of way was mistaken by some French officers who passed by his hut for the keeper of a canteen.² "Some absinthe," they said, "and make haste about it." The major, who had lived in France, served it much to their liking. "How much to pay!" "Nothing, gentlemen." "Nothing! People don't give

¹ This was no easy matter. *Punch* had a picture at the time of two ragged, shivering soldiers. One of them says to the other: "Jim, they say they'll give us a medal!" "Indeed!" answered the other. "Maybe they'll give us a coat to put it on!"

² A place where liquors and other things are sold to the soldiers.

absinthe away." "Gentlemen," said the major, "I am in command of the — regiment of the line, and am delighted to have had the chance of serving my French comrades." The Frenchmen apologized. A few days afterwards, the rest of the officers thought that they too ought to express their regret for the mistake ; so they paid a visit to the major, and when they went away he had no absinthe left.

Fighting went on daily, and many curious things happened. Once, Captain, now Lord, Wolseley missed his way in a snow-storm, though he knew the ground perfectly well. Finding a great boulder, he was going to sit down upon it for a short rest, when he saw three Russians sheltering themselves on the other side. He was unarmed and ran away as fast as he could, and the Russians were too cold to use their rifles. Sir Evelyn Wood, who then belonged to the Naval Brigade,¹ tells a story of how he was talking to a sergeant in charge of a battery, when what they thought was a shot lodged in the parapet close by. It was not a shot, but a shell ; a few moments later it burst ; a fragment cut Mr. Wood's cap off his head, but no harm was done. Once when Lord Raglan was going round the batteries, he sat down close to a 60-pounder gun which was being fired, and at which several

¹ A detachment of men from the Fleet, who served in the siege.

Russian cannon were being aimed. A shot went through the parapet six inches above Lord Raglan's head, covering him with stones and earth. He stood up to shake himself, saying as coolly as usual, "Quite close enough."

Early in April a great bombardment was begun, and was carried on for ten days. More than 100,000 shell and shot were fired into the town, and the defences were broken down in more than one place. If an assault had been made—and the Russians, as we now know, fully expected that it would be made—Sebastopol would in all probability have been taken. The Russians had suffered very greatly in the bombardment, losing more than 6000 men. The Allies did not suffer nearly so much. If a Russian shot missed the batteries it did no further harm, but shot fired against the town commonly hit something.

By this time, matters had greatly improved in the English camp. There was a railway between it and the sea, and stores were brought up in abundance. By the time that the siege came to an end, everything in our army was in good order; far better, in fact, than among the French.

On June 7 there was another heavy bombardment. When it was finished, an assault was made. The French took a fortification named the Mamelon. This had been made by Todleben in front of the walls, and

had given the Allies a great deal of trouble. On the 18th of the same month—a day chosen because it was the anniversary of Waterloo—the French attacked the Malakoff, and the English the Redan, both of them important parts of the fortifications of Sebastopol. Both attacks failed, it is generally thought, because the French general resolved to attack too soon ; that is, before the bombardment had sufficiently broken down the defences.

On June 28 Lord Raglan died.

On September 8 the French, who had now brought their siege works close up to the Russian fortifications, stormed the Malakoff and took it. The same day the English attacked the Redan, but were beaten back. But the siege was now over. On the following night the Russians left Sebastopol, after destroying all that they could. They had lost at least 200,000 men. Great as had been the sufferings of the Allies, those of the besieged were far greater.

Peace was proclaimed on April 28, 1856.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CAWNPORE, LUCKNOW, DELHI.

IN the early summer of 1857 a terrible mutiny broke out among the native troops of the Indian army. There were many causes at work to bring this about. I cannot describe them here ; perhaps no one knows all about them. But I will mention one, because it is easily described, and also because it actually produced the first outbreak. Grease had been used in making the cartridges served out to the native troops. The ends of the cartridges used in those days had to be bitten or torn off. But to put a thing on which there was fat into the mouth, or even to touch it, was shocking to many of the Hindoos. And when the report was spread that the British Government had ordered this fat to be used for the purpose of making the Hindoos do what their religion forbade, it made the soldiers furious. At Meerut, a town 40 miles N.E. of Delhi, some troopers of a native cavalry regiment were sentenced to imprisonment for refusing to touch the cartridges served out to them. This was

on May 10. The next day all the native regiments (which I shall henceforth call *Sepoys*) mutinied, murdering some of their officers. They broke open the prison and released their comrades, plundered everything they could lay their hands on, and then made their way to Delhi, the ancient capital, as it may be called, of India.

The mutiny which began in this way lasted for nearly two years. I cannot tell the whole story of it, and so have chosen three of the most famous names in it.

CAWNPORE.

Cawnpore was an important place on the road from Calcutta to Delhi. At this time it was garrisoned by three Sepoy regiments. There were no European troops. The officer in command was Sir Hugh Wheeler, who had had Sepoys under him all his life, and found it hard to believe that they were not loyal. Still he could not help seeing that all was not right, and he began to take precautions. Unfortunately he did not act at all wisely. He might have made the magazine into a strong fortress. What he did was to fortify in a way some barracks. These were so placed, however, that had the defences been much stronger than they were they could hardly have been held. A supply of provisions was laid in, but this too was very

badly done. But this, we shall see, did not matter in the end. On June 4 the Sepoy regiments mutinied. They intended to march away and join their comrades



CAWNPORE.

at Delhi, but a native prince, Nana Sahib by name, who believed that the British Government had treated him badly, and was eager for revenge, persuaded them to attack the Europeans at Cawnpore.

The barracks had been hastily surrounded by a mud wall. Behind this there were gathered together about one thousand people. Not quite half were men, the soldiers among them being chiefly the officers of the regiments that had mutinied. For three weeks they held out. They might at any time have cut their way through the enemy, but they could not leave behind them the women and children. At the last nothing was left but to treat with the enemy. Nana Sahib promised to send them safely away. They were to march out of the fort, and to embark in boats which had been provided for them. On their way to the river they were attacked by the treacherous enemy. Some reached the boats, and perished afterwards; others were afterwards murdered. Nearly a quarter of the whole number, happier than their companions, had died of disease, or been killed during the siege.

LUCKNOW.

Here matters were better managed than at Cawnpore, thanks to the wisdom of the officer in command, Sir Henry Lawrence. The building, which had been formerly occupied by the Resident,¹ was strongly

¹ Lucknow had been the capital of the native State of Oudh. Oudh had been governed by a Rajah, with the assistance of a British officer, who was called the "Resident." This officer had a strong force of soldiers to protect him.

fortified, and a good store of provisions was laid in. The place was invested by the mutineers on July 1. The next day Sir Henry Lawrence was mortally wounded by a shell which entered the room where he was sitting. He died on the 4th. On the 30th of the same month General Havelock, who had reached Cawnpore too late to rescue the inmates of the fort, and was on his way to relieve Lucknow, reached a spot about fifty miles from that town. But here he had to halt. His little army was not strong enough to go forward. He had started from Cawnpore with less than 1500 men, of whom not quite 1200 were Europeans. He had had to fight two battles, and had lost between two and three hundred of his few European soldiers. He had to count on losing more before he could reach Lucknow. He could hardly have more than 600 fit for service when he arrived. He had nearly exhausted his ammunition, and he had no means of carrying the sick and wounded. He fell back. A few days afterwards he advanced, and again retired. To have gone on would have been to lose his army, and to take away all hope of the safety of Lucknow. On September 19 he started for the third time. He had now 3179 men, of whom all but 400 were Europeans.

Meanwhile the Lucknow garrison had been holding out bravely. The Residency, which, as I have said,

they occupied, was not a fortress. It was not strong, and it was too near the buildings of the city. Four times the enemy assaulted it, and were driven back. The garrison, too, had to fight under the ground as well as above the ground, for the enemy never ceased to make mines, which the garrison had to destroy with counter mines. Sometimes the two would meet, and then there would be a fierce struggle almost in the dark. But so watchful and so skilful were the engineers in the garrison that the enemy never but once succeeded in making a mine that did any serious damage. But there was dreadful loss of life. In eighty-seven days, the time between July 1, when the Residency was first besieged, and September 25, when it was relieved for the first time, there died, killed or mortally wounded, or struck down by disease, 350 Europeans and 133 native soldiers.

On September 23 Havelock, who had now Sir James Outram with him,¹ came in sight of Lucknow. After two days' fighting, which I cannot attempt to describe, he and his brave men made their way into the Residency. It was not done without heavy loss, for the enemy, who were trained soldiers, trained, too, by British officers, and well knew that they had com-

¹ Outram might have taken over the command from Havelock, but very generously offered to serve under him till Lucknow had been relieved,

mitted crimes which could not be pardoned, fought fiercely. Altogether 535 British and native soldiers were either killed or wounded in these two days—about one in six, that is, of the whole army which had marched out of Cawnpore. As for the joy of the people in Lucknow, of the men, who had begun to doubt whether they could defend the place much longer, of the women, who had suffered so much themselves, and so much more in seeing their children fade away before their eyes, there is no telling it.

But all was not over yet. To put the matter shortly, another siege began. Outram and Havelock were not strong enough to leave the place, taking with them all the sick and wounded, with the women and children. Of these there were altogether about a thousand. This second siege lasted for seven weeks. On November 16 Sir Colin Campbell, afterwards Lord Clyde, reached Lucknow; the garrison sallied forth at the same time, and attacked the enemy. This time the place was really relieved. Eight days later Havelock died. Sir Colin Campbell and Outram marched away, and for a time Lucknow was left to the enemy.

DELHI.

In the midst of the fighting that took place during the first relief of Lucknow, news was brought that

Delhi had been taken. The troops were partially formed into a square and the despatch read to them. They heard it with a loud cheer, and indeed it was very good news indeed. It was the first great thing that had been done towards bringing this dreadful war to an end.

I have said that the Sepoy regiments that mutinied at Meerut fled at once to Delhi. This city had been the seat of a powerful kingdom, and there was still a King of Delhi, though he was a king in name only, the real government of the country being in our hands. But the leaders of the rebellion hoped that the ancient name would be a source of strength to them.

The Sepoys did dreadful deeds in Delhi. I would not describe them if I could. But I can tell you of some brave acts which our countrymen did, faithful to their duty to the last. A telegraph clerk was killed at his desk, having just wired to Sir John Lawrence, who was Governor of the Punjaub: "The Sepoys have come in from Meerut, and are burning everything." Sir John Lawrence received the message in a few hours' time, and at once began preparing to send help. No one did more to save the British power in India, and it was a great thing that he was warned so soon. Then there was a young officer, Willoughby by name, who was in charge of the magazine. He did good service, and in the very bravest way. He had eight Europeans with him.

For a time they defended the magazine, hoping that help would come. When Lieutenant Willoughby saw that this would not be, he determined to blow up the magazine and all the stores in it. A train of powder had been laid, and one of the eight—his name was Scully—offered to fire it when Willoughby gave the signal. Scully perished in the explosion, but a thousand mutineers perished with him, and all the ammunition in the magazine was destroyed. Four of the eight made their way out in safety. Willoughby himself was murdered on his way to Meerut.

The first thing that the British Government did was to prepare to take Delhi out of the hands of the mutineers and the king, who indeed was nothing more than a puppet in their hands. All the troops that were available were hastily got together, and on June 8 the siege of Delhi was begun. To take the city seemed almost hopeless. One side of the city was protected by the river. On the others were fortifications not less than seven miles round, very strong, and with more than a hundred guns mounted upon them. The besieging army consisted of but a few thousand men. It could not even attempt to invest the city. All that was possible was to attack that part where there seemed most hope of success. Behind the walls of the city there were many thousands of rebels, trained soldiers all of them. And the

besiegers, for the present at least, had no heavy guns with which to make a breach in the walls. For about three months, indeed, there was no siege. A small British army held its own against a far more numerous enemy. There was fighting almost, one might say, without ceasing. In these two months thirty actions took place, one, that is, for every two days. And some of these actions lasted for more than a day. We find an officer writing, after a grand attack by the enemy had been made and beaten off: "Most of us had been fighting for more than thirty hours." On June 23 the enemy made a tremendous attack on our camp. It was the hundredth anniversary of the battle of Plassey, and there was a very common belief that it was to be the last of the British rule. Fired by the hope of bringing this to pass the Sepoys fiercely assailed our camp. They were beaten back with heavy loss, and from that time were far less confident than before.

At last, early in September, the heavy guns, that were wanted to make a breach in the walls, came up. The mutineers had tried to take them as they approached, but were driven off with heavy loss. On the 4th of the month they reached the British camp, each drawn by twenty couple of oxen. The engineers busied themselves in building the batteries, and the guns were mounted as they were finished, and opened

fire on the city. On the 11th the guns were all at work, and two days afterwards they had made such breaches in the walls—they were of stone, which does not resist nearly so well as earth—that it seemed as if the assault could be made. But it was necessary first to find out the exact state of the case. Four officers volunteered to examine the breaches. This they did, and narrowly escaped with their lives. The report which they brought back was such that an assault was ordered for the next day at dawn.

The attacking force was in five columns. The first and second of these were to force their way into the city through breaches that had been made in the walls; the third was to enter by the Cashmere Gate;¹ the fourth was to go against the Cabul Gate; the fifth was to follow the first. In all the five columns there were not more than 6000 men, of whom about one-fifth were British soldiers; inside the walls there were not less than 30,000 rebels.

It had been arranged that the assault should be made at dawn, but it was bright daylight before the columns reached the walls. Both the breaches were carried, but not without heavy loss. At the second twenty-nine out of the thirty-nine men who carried the scaling ladders in part of the column were struck

¹ The gates of Delhi were called by the names of the provinces to which they led.

down. But fresh men filled their places ; the ladders were set against the walls ; men mounted, cut down the gunners at their guns, and drove all before them. Perhaps the hardest work of all was done at the Cashmere Gate. A party of Sappers and Miners made their way to the Gate, carrying with them the powder-bags with which it was to be blown up. The drawbridge had been partly destroyed, but they crossed by the beams that were left, and placed the powder against the gate. The wicket was open, and through this the enemy within went on firing at our men. A sergeant was killed while laying the train of powder ; the officer who was to light the fuse was mortally wounded just as he was about to do it ; he handed the match to a sergeant, and the sergeant was shot down, but not till he had succeeded. A tremendous explosion followed ; the Gate was blown in, and the bugle sounded thrice as a signal for the column to enter.

The fourth column only failed in its task. At one time it seemed as if the rebels might make a counter attack in this direction, which would have been dangerous to the whole British army, but a charge of the Cavalry Brigade drove them back.

It must not be supposed that Delhi was taken when the attacking columns made their way into it over the breaches or through the gates. The fight was carried

on fiercely and obstinately in the streets. One of the best and bravest of the English officers, Brigadier Nicholson, whom men called "The Lion of the Punjaub," was killed within the city. So were many others. Almost every street was defended by the rebels. It was not till the afternoon of September 20, more than six days after the morning of the first attack, that the Palace, the last stronghold of the rebels in Delhi, was taken.

The British army, which never numbered more than 10,000 men, lost nearly 4000 in killed and wounded during the siege. How many died of disease, sooner or later, it would not be possible to say. But the taking of Delhi was well worth all that it cost.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THERE were many wars during the forty odd years which followed the Indian Mutiny. A country that has possessions in every quarter of the world cannot expect to be often completely at peace. It was so

with Rome,¹ and it is likely to be so with England. But it was not till 1899 that there was a war so serious as to call forth the whole strength of the Empire. In the October of that year the two republics in South Africa, known as the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, declared war on this country. I cannot go into the causes which brought about this event. In the republics there was a fear that England wished to interfere with their independence. We, on the other hand, had good reason for thinking that there was a scheme for driving us entirely out of South Africa and establishing there a Dutch empire. (It must be remembered that the ruling race in the republics was Dutch, and that the majority of the inhabitants of Cape Colony were of this race.) In October 1899, then, the Boer army—the inhabitants of the two republics are known as Boers—invaded Natal.

I cannot tell the story of what happened during the two years and a half² that followed. It must be enough to say something about what was the most important event of the war, the siege of Ladysmith.

Ladysmith is a town in the Colony of Natal, about

¹ There was a temple at Rome dedicated to the God Janus, the gates of which were always open as long as there was war going on in any part of the Empire. We are told that they were shut three times only in the course of eight hundred years.

² War was declared on October 11, 1899, and peace was concluded on May 31, 1902.

twenty miles from the border of what was the Orange Free State. A worse place to defend could hardly be found, for it was commanded by hills on every side. But there were reasons for holding it; a vast quantity of stores had been accumulated there, and it guarded the Colony of Natal. The siege began after an unfortunate battle fought near the town, in which many British troops were taken prisoner, and the rest driven back within the fortifications. On November 2, 1899, the town was invested. General White, who was in command, had some 12,000 men of all arms. He had a very long line to defend, and the Boers were in possession of an outer circle of hills. Their guns, too, had a greater range than ours. The women and children were lodged in a camp which was, of course, not fired upon by the enemy; another camp was occupied by part of the British force; the rest of it garrisoned the town itself.

A week after the investment the Boers made their first attack. It was not very vigorously pushed, and two regiments (the Manchester and 1st battalion 60th Rifles) repulsed it with but little loss. Then for some weeks they sat still, waiting till want of food—there were thousands of women and children to be fed, besides the soldiers—and disease should compel surrender. Of course there was fighting from time to time. On December 5, for instance, a sortie was

made by which two of the Boer guns which had been particularly troublesome were destroyed, and a Maxim captured. This exploit was the work of Irregulars; on the 11th the Regulars had their turn and captured a howitzer. All this time, and for weeks afterwards, the Boer fire went on; sometimes as many as two or three hundred shells were thrown into the town in the course of a single day. Not so much harm was done as might have been expected; but sometimes the explosion was terribly fatal. On December 17 six Natal Carabineers were killed and three wounded in this way; on the 22nd five of the Devons were killed and twelve wounded in the same way. Then on January 6, 1900, came the great Boer assault. There is a range of hills to the south of the town, one end of which was known as Cæsar's Camp, the other as Waggon Hill. The attack was a complete surprise. The storming party reached the ridge without opposition. But then the fighting began in earnest. One regiment (the Manchester) held Cæsar's Camp; these were reinforced by three companies of the Gordon Highlanders and four companies of the Rifle Brigade. A battery of Field Artillery (the 53rd) also came to their help. It had to fire over their heads into the enemy; but this it did without making a mistake, a feat all the more wonderful because the gunners had no protection. But their courage never

failed, nor their skill. One man—Barber by name—whose leg and arm had been stricken off, called to his men to roll his body off the trail and go on working the gun. On Waggon Hill the fight was even fiercer. There the garrison consisted of Imperial Light Horse and Sappers. They held their own most gallantly, though they had no entrenchment or defence of any kind. Five companies of the 60th Rifles and a few Gordons came to their help, and a little later, two more troops of Light Horse and another four companies of Rifles. The fighting lasted for hours ; it was often hand to hand ; men slew and were slain in turn as in the great battles of Homer. Further on in the day the Devons came to the help of the garrison and swept the Boers before them. The gallant men at the other end of the ridge saw what had happened and were cheered to new effort. At both points the Boer attack was repulsed.

For six weeks more the siege lasted. It was a weary time, for the hospitals were crowded, and food grew scarcer and scarcer, and there was the sickness of hope deferred, for day after day could be heard the thunder of the guns of the relieving army. I wish that I had space to tell the story of that army's advance. There was a time of darkness, almost of despair ; mistakes were made, attacks made that should never have been attempted, and relinquished

when success was almost coming in sight. One thing never failed, the steadfast, enduring courage of the British soldier. At last the difficult task was accomplished; Lord Dundonald, with two squadrons of cavalry, made his way into the town. On March 3, just 110 days after the complete investment, Sir Redvers Buller, who was in command of the relieving army, made a state entry. More than a thousand men in the garrison had died of wounds or disease. If Ladysmith had fallen South Africa might well have been lost. There would certainly have been an insurrection of the Dutch in Cape Colony, and it is not unlikely that some of our enemies in Europe might have gathered courage enough to declare against us.

CHAPTER XXVI.

QUEEN VICTORIA AND KING EDWARD VII.

In 1897 Queen Victoria kept her Diamond Jubilee. She had reigned more than sixty years.¹ The Empire

¹ Queen Victoria came to the throne, on the death of her uncle, William IV., June 29, 1837. George III. succeeded his grandfather, George II., October 25, 1760, and died January 29, 1820, the length of his reign being therefore 59 years.

had prospered in her time, greatly extending its borders and growing in wealth and power. Not a little of this prosperity was due to the Queen herself. Never had there been a Sovereign more illustrious, more devoted to duty ; and, in later years at least, she had come to know about some things more than any of her ministers. But she could not do what she did and be what she was but at a heavy cost. Not to speak of her private sorrows, she felt the troubles of her people—scarcity, pestilence, war. And then, when she was far on in years, and her health was beginning to fail, came the great trouble of the South African war. A large army of more than 200,000 men had been sent from this country to the seat of war, and every day brought news of deaths in battles or by disease of British soldiers and of the brave men who had hastened from the great Colonies to help the Mother Country in her need. Many of these she knew ; all were in a peculiar sense her servants ; their death was something like a personal loss to her. And still, fighting against growing weakness, she went on with the work of the state, adding to it the self-imposed duty of visiting the sick and wounded when they were brought back to these shores.

On January 22, 1901, the Queen died, having lived just three days longer than the longest-lived of her predecessors, George III. Never in the history of the

world, we may safely say, did the death of a ruler bring with it a wider and a deeper sorrow, for never had ruler been so loved and trusted. It must be remembered also how great was the extent of her Empire, so that this loss touched not less than three hundred millions of people, a fourth, it may be reckoned, of the whole human race. Nor did the news take, as it would have taken half a century before, weeks, or even months to travel to distant regions. It was flashed by the telegraph wires in a few minutes, or at most hours, to almost every part of the Empire. The mourning for Queen Victoria was indeed a great mourning.

And the funeral was a great solemnity. The Queen had died at her palace at Osborne in the Isle of Wight. On February 1 the coffin was taken from Osborne to Cowes, and from Cowes the Royal yacht, *Alberta*, transported it to Gosport. All the warships within reach had been gathered to this neighbourhood and ranged in two lines. As the *Alberta* passed between them they fired a salute, the last honour which they were to render to "Her Majesty." The remains rested for that night at Gosport; the next day they were brought to London, and conveyed on a gun-carriage between the two railway stations, Victoria and Paddington, escorted by as complete a representation of the British army as could be got

together at the time. In point of numbers the procession could not be very large, for the main strength of our soldiers was elsewhere, but every arm of the service was represented. This military funeral was in strict obedience to the wishes of the Queen. She had always had a special interest in the army. It was a taste hereditary in her family. She herself in the early days of her reign had loved to attend reviews clad in a scarlet riding-habit. There was a great following of notable mourners. Close behind the coffin rode the new King, supported on one side by the Duke of Connaught and on the other by the Emperor of Germany. The Emperor showed himself at his very best during this time of mourning. He had hurried over from Germany at the news of his grandmother's illness, had watched with evident sorrow at her bedside, and had rendered all the service in his power during the days that followed, days that were as full of occupation as they were of sorrow. Behind these three, the chief mourners of the day, followed the Kings of Portugal and Greece, and representatives of all the royal families in Europe. That night the remains rested in St. George's Chapel at Windsor. On the following Monday they were taken, privately and without any pomp, to the Mausoleum at Frogmore, and laid beside the coffin of the husband from

whom the dead Queen had been parted nearly forty years¹ before.

The interval between the Accession of King Edward and the day appointed for his Coronation was unusually long. The Coronation is, of course, a great festival, and cannot decently be celebrated during the period of mourning. It is also a matter of convenience that it should take place in the summer, when the days are long, and when fine weather may reasonably be expected. Queen Victoria herself had been crowned on June 28, just eight days more than a year after her accession. The day appointed for her successor was the 25th of the same month. Very great preparations were made for the ceremony. Westminster Abbey was fitted up for the reception of an assembly more splendid, it may well be believed, than any that had ever been gathered together on such, one might almost say, on any occasion. The peers and peeresses of the Kingdom, the judges, the officers of State, representatives from all the great towns were to have a place. With these were to be representatives from the Colonies and of India, and embassies from all the nations of the civilized world. The streets of London were to be lined with troops, while miles of seats had been erected for the accom-

¹ The Prince Consort died December 14, 1861.

modation of spectators without number. And then, only the day before that appointed for the ceremony, it was announced that the King was too ill to be present, and a few hours later the startling news that he had to undergo a dangerous operation. Seldom has a nation passed more quickly from glad expectation to anxious fear. Happily all went better than the most sanguine had dared to hope. The operation was successfully performed. The King recovered with quite unusual rapidity, and the ceremony of Coronation was performed, with diminished splendour indeed, but in the midst of the most sincere thankfulness on the part of the nation, on August 9, 1902

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